University of Alberta

The Pioneer, Ethnicity and Alberta's Community Museums

by

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ABSTRACT

This study uses museological theory and the interplay between frontierism and metropolitanism in western Canadian history to analyze Alberta community museum development and the role of ethnicity in what has become a dominant pioneer narrative. It focusses on ethnic community museums arguing that they have adopted a common narrative structure and rhetoric presenting the generic pioneer as conqueror, civilizer and superior moral being, to illustrate participation in an Alberta community. To express ethnic community membership they infuse the generic with elements of ethnic identity rooted in the homeland. Six case studies, classified as ethno-geographic, ethno-religious or ethno-cultural, based on the represented relationship between prairie and homeland, inform the analysis: High River's Museum of the Highwood (British/Anglo Canadian), the Bonnyville and District Museum (French), Mundare's Basilian Fathers Museum (Ukrainian), Cardston's Card Home and Court House Museum (Mormon), Dickson's Danish Canadian National Museum and Gardens and the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre.

FOR BLAIR

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List of Abbreviations

Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre (CCCC)

Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Museum (CCCCM)

Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR)

Church of the Latter-day Saints (LDS)

City of Edmonton Archives (CEA)

Danish Canadian National Museum and Gardens (DCNM)

Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC)

Historical Society of Alberta (HSA)

North West Mounted Police (NWMP)

Northern Alberta Old Timers' Association (NAOTA)

Oblates of Mary Immaculate (OMI)

Order of Saint Basil the Great (OSBM)

Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA)

Provincial Museum of Alberta (PMA)

Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate (SSMI)

Southern Alberta Pioneers and Descendants Association (SAPDA)

Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada (UCWLC)

Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada (UWAC)

INTRODUCTION

In 1933, the influential Edmonton photographer Ernest Brown opened the Pioneer Days Museum. Its main message was that "the old timers, our pioneers came, carved a home for themselves out of the wilderness, and by dint of hard and mostly unselfish toil, laid the foundation for our cities and our towns as well as the civilization we enjoy to-day."[1] Brown's was one of the first Alberta museums that claimed to interpret, as its primary objective, the pioneer experience on the Canadian prairies. By 2003, when nearly 200 museums and at least as many other heritage sites depicted this phenomenon, the message had changed very little.[2] The pioneer has been, and remains, the dominant figure in Alberta's community museums because it allows communities and individuals to establish a place in a mainstream Alberta past, and therefore present and future, by using a generic narrative and a tradition of mastery over the land as the basis for their interpretation. In the ethnic community museum the flexibility of the pioneer symbol and the nature of museum exhibition allow ethnic communities to integrate, manipulate and append their specific experience to the generic narrative to express an ethnic identity that is simultaneously rooted in Western Canada and anchored in the homeland. Both Alberta and ethnic communities are imagined and rely on the power of symbol and myth to maintain them; the museum is an important stage on which to outline and impart these symbols and myths in the collective memory of the community.

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[1]"'Pioneer Days': A Chronology and an Explanation," Museum advertisements (1936), Ernest Brown Manuscript Collection, file 65.124/159a, Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA), Edmonton, AB.

[2]Museum listings compiled by author. See Appendix for the complete list and references.

IMAGINING ALBERTA'S COMMUNITIES

Imagined community is the concept that Benedict Anderson, in his *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, articulates as the feeling that, although a person may never know, meet or hear of many of his or her fellow members in a society, "in the minds of each lives the image of their communion."[3] The mind's image is constructed around the symbols and mythologies that members of a community share, and, as suggested by sociologist Emile Durkhiem's "conscious collective" concept, that comprise a sense of shared values, beliefs and sentiments.[4] These feelings of commonality in a community are rooted in a patchwork of shared memories that come to be codified in its history.[5] This happens because to "share in a collective past, in an overarching historical experience, is to share in a communal present."[6] More urgently, to have a common present ensures a common future and the comfort of the continuity of those values and beliefs that constitute a part of the community identity.

The more homogenous a group, the easier it is to imagine a collective identity. When the group is made up of individuals from different backgrounds and a variety of experiences, it is much more difficult to construct a communion with others whose history and traditions are unknown or unfamiliar. In a plural society great disparity often separates its members. They may belong to diverse religious, occupational, racial or ethnic groups; look different;

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[3]Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (New York: Verso, 1991), 6.

[4]Gabriel A. Almond, "The Intellectual History of the Civic Culture Concept," in *The Civic Culture Revisited*, ed. Gabriel A. Almond and Sidney Verba (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980), 11.

[5]Harold Troper, "Cultural Pluralism and Historical Memory," in Canadian Museums Association, *Cultural Diversity and Museums: Exploring Our Identities* (Ottawa: Canadian Museums Association, 1994), 15.

[6]Ibid.

speak different languages; practice distinctive habits of personal care and dress; or show considerable economic and social disparity. This plurality begets plural identities, with the result that collective identities can be created around a number of layered and overlapping communities.[7] For instance, a Chinese woman living in the city of Calgary may count herself simultaneously a member of a Chinese community centred in her local Chinatown, a Calgarian, an Albertan, a Canadian, and an overseas Chinese. She may also possess gender, economic, or politically based identities. The most useful symbols are thus those that can tie such collective identities together, exploiting the similarities, while accommodating difference in other ways. In the Alberta context, the pioneer is one of these symbols. It pulls together multiple groups by virtue of the one thing they experienced communally: a geographic space and the interaction between human beings and the land within it.

In fact, when the settlement of Alberta began in large numbers in the last decades of the nineteenth century, perhaps the only commonality individuals could claim was residence in a place called the West. Therefore, place became the thing that Albertans imagined. The symbols and mythologies that provided the foundation for their regional identity grew out of the shared idea of a particular geographic space, the activities and events collectively experienced within it, and the attitudes and mind-set it is thought to have encouraged.[8] It is not enough to make symbols out of prairie, mountains and sky, however, even though these natural elements feature prominently in Alberta's official symbols, like the provincial coat

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[7]J.M.S. Careless, *Frontier and Metropolis: Regions, Cities, and Identities in Canada before 1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 72. Some of the arguments presented in this paragraph, and the one following, were originally made by the author in a research paper written for History 669, a graduate seminar on Canadian regionalism. See Crystal Willie, "The United Farmers and Farm Women of Alberta and The Uses of Regional Identity and Mythology" (University of Alberta, History 669, Fall 2001), 2.

[8]Willie, 2.

of arms, tartan and colours.[9] The pioneer is a much more powerful symbol because it is based on the land but establishes a dominion of humankind over it. Soil is just dirt until it has been soaked with the blood, sweat and tears of the pioneer who triumphs when the land produces a crop to sell. This idea is mythologized in the generic pioneer narrative through three themes: the pioneer as conqueror, the pioneer as civilizer and the pioneer as superior moral being. Together they overlie a basic struggle that pits the pioneer against the land in a battle of civilization versus wilderness. This underlying theme makes the land crucial to the narrative as the driving influence on the society and the communities that grew there. It also ensures the continuing value of the mythology into the twenty-first century in a province that is economically and politically reliant upon the exploitation of natural resources. The generic pioneer narrative that is shared and so consistently present in Alberta's community museums has become almost an archetype. It functions as a template adopted by the museum as the base of interpretation and then built upon to reflect a community's specific experience.

Alberta's settlement era ethnic groups also build the representation of their own identity on the foundation of the generic narrative. The museum is an important medium through which to do so because it allows items of material culture, regardless of their degree of interrelatedness, to be placed in an order, and under a particular message, in a way that other public history media such as books, statues or films cannot. A museum has the rare opportunity to engage participants using a number of different senses to demonstrate or create more subtle and complicated connections. Because of this, the ethnic community museum

[9]The Alberta coat of arms features stylized depictions of the sky, snow-capped mountains, foothills, prairie and a field of wheat. The official tartan is green (representing forests) and blue (representing skies and lakes), with gold, pink and black stripes representing the prairies, the wild rose and coal and petroleum respectively. Alberta's official colours are blue and gold, representing the sky and the prairie.

can mix the imagery and mythology of the homeland with the generic pioneer narrative, revealing and creating an ethnic pioneer.

While the generic pioneer finds its genesis and drive on the Canadian prairie the pioneer's ethnicity originates in the homeland and is shaped by forces from outside the prairie region. The symbols and mythology of the homeland mingle with the generic pioneer to create a specifically ethnic pioneer whose story, to differing degrees, puts the homeland at the centre with the prairie as its cultural periphery. The homeland is incorporated into the museum's representation in three ways: through the traditions and values brought from the homeland that are shared with the generic pioneer and therefore easily integrated into the presentation; through the perceptual elements of ethnicity, or the specific material culture and traditions, again brought from the homeland, by which the pioneer is surrounded; and through those iconic symbols of the homeland that are so imbedded in the group's consciousness that they are included in the museum's interpretation regardless of their fit with the narrative or their significance in time. The museum uses text, artifacts, replicas and other exhibit elements to chart for its visitors the community's identity, overlaying the generic pioneer narrative with these expressions of ethnicity.

Community Identities and the Role of the Museum

Museums are commonly justified to policy makers and funders as a means to facilitate the education of the public. By putting on display the elements of a community's identity, the museum teaches the ideas that the community values - both to the group's own members and to outsiders - whose perceptions, in turn, reflect on and reinforce those ideas. As both educational and cultural institutions, museums are agents of civil society, or the collection

of sites, physical and symbolic, where individuals form their basic attachments and learn to be members of a community.[10] These attachments eventually come to comprise an individual's identity and affect his or her behaviour and attitudes, which, in turn, impact directly on a society's cohesiveness and stability. Further, the socialization of the society's members contributes to the maintenance or destruction of its values and structure. Education acts as a "powerful transformative engine" for entrenching these values and structures.[11] Educational programming and activities in the museum and elsewhere often cater to teaching children but the continued socialization of adult members of the community is especially important to the maintenance of a social order.[12] As adults are most commonly no longer engaged with the formal education system, there exists a limited number of ways to facilitate adult education; one of these means is the museum.

Tony Bennett provides a sophisticated application of the idea of civil society to a public history situation through what he calls "the exhibitionary complex" and explains as the transfer of objects and ideas, traditionally accessed in the private collections of the elite, to the popular imagination. Focussing on Britain's nineteenth-century exhibitions as vehicles for "inscribing and broadcasting messages of power . . . throughout society," Bennett applies Michel Foucault's sites of power theories, as outlined in *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, to the museum as an institution for socialization.[13] The exhibition, Bennett

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[10]Ivan Karp, "Introduction," in *Museums and Communities: The Politics of Public Culture*, ed. Ivan Karp, Christine Mullen Kreamer and Stephen D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Institute, 1992), 4. "Civil society" is the term used in Karp's discussion; other sources use the term "civil culture" to describe similar ideas.

[11]Almond, 10.

[12]Ibid., 10, 29.

[13]Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), 123-124.

argues, allowed the masses to gain a collective idea, as presented and promoted by those with power, about what it was to be a citizen. Through the deliberately ordered display of the imperial bounty of the British Empire, the exhibition mapped the world's power relationships, including Britain's privileged place among them. Bennett equates the exhibition to the body of the offender in Foucault's analysis. In the same way that Foucault suggests that social order was reinforced in the minds of the populace when they observed the spectacle of public punishment, Bennett argues that the existing hegemony was reinforced when visitors to the exhibition viewed the power of the crown acting on the social body, the nation and the world.[14] Bennett's analysis suggests that the desire to create a self-regulating society motivated these exhibitions. The visitors, seeing themselves depicted in the exhibition, would not only internalize and perpetuate the values propounded by those in power, but also recognize their own place in the power structure, including their relationship to others both inside and outside it.[15]

Bennett writes about a time and place where democracy was rising to the fore of the political system and violence as a means of controlling the populace was becoming a less viable option. Referring to an earlier transition stage when the absolute power of the *ancien régime* in France was being questioned, Foucault quotes French magistrate, Joseph Michel Antoine Servan, a reformer of the penal system writing in the lead up to the French Revolution:

> A stupid despot may constrain his slaves with iron chains; but a true politician binds them even more strongly by the chain of their own ideas; it is at the stable point of reason that he secures the end of the chain; this link is all the

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[14]Ibid., 127.

[15]Ibid., 130-131.

> stronger in that we do not know of what it is made and we believe it to be our own work; despair and time eat away the bonds of iron and steel, but they are powerless against the habitual union of ideas, they can only tighten it still more; and on the soft fibre of the brain is founded the unshakable base of the soundest of Empires."[16]

In emerging and established democratic societies, symbol takes the place of physical coercion to establish social or political orders in the imaginations of its citizens, a development in which the museum is an important venue of popularization.[17] It is not insignificant that on the first anniversary of the ejection of the French Bourbons from power, the Palace of the Louvre opened as the Museum of the Republic. The new political order recognized the value of such an institution in cultivating a new national consciousness in the minds of the citizenry, a concept exploited to a much greater degree once Napoleon came to power and began to fill the Louvre, renamed the Musée Napoleon, with the bounty of his imperial crusades.[18]

The community museum can act in a similar way to promote a community consciousness. An individual's desire to act in self-interest, and potentially contrary to the public interest, is tempered by four things: patriotism, community loyalties, religious values, and simple habit and tradition.[19] The community museum regularly deals with each of these. The power structure in community museums certainly differs from those of colonial state-sponsored institutions but the desire to perpetuate the value of a particular social order and ideology remains the same. Those who control the museum, often a group of individuals

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[16]Joseph Michel Antoine Servan, quoted in Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,* trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995), 103.

[17]Flora Edouwaye S.Kaplan, *Museums and the Making of "Ourselves": The Role of Objects in National Identity* (London: Leichester University Press, 1994), 2.

[18]Edward P. Alexander, *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1979), 23-27.

[19]Almond, 30.

belonging to the local historical society or to a cultural or religious organization, become the official keepers of that community's history. They decide which messages are important and what artifacts and images will be used to demonstrate them. Upon visiting the museum, members of the community view their past laid out before them, often recognizing elements of the landscape or items they or their elders have owned and used, and internalize the history they see presented as their own. The symbols and mythologies they observe not only become a part of their present identity as individuals but they develop a sense of communion with those who shared 'their' experience. Just as visitors to Bennett's nineteenth-century exhibitions learned who they were as British citizens, visitors to the community museum learn who they are as a member of that community.

Civil society should not be oversimplified, however, as a means of controlling behaviour and placating dissent, in that it can be used to instill ideas not only of obedience but also of belonging. Socialization affects people on many levels, impacting their daily routines, the kind of people they become, and the ideas and things they invest with value. It is how people learn who they are. Museums are spaces for defining these identities, traditions and values; they can also be places for challenging such definitions.[20] In his introduction to *Museums and Communities: The Politics and Poetics of Museum Display*, Ivan Karp argues that civil society, like an individual's identity, is a stage where players are not static and separate but active and relational.[21] His discussion of the museum's role in civil society allows the visitor a degree of agency. For Karp, people are neither the sum total of their disseparate identities nor empty vessels waiting to be filled with the museum's

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[20]Karp, 4.

[21]Ibid., 6.

message. Instead, in each individual, personal associations and experiences run together and dissolve into a complex, flexible and unique set of allegiances and proclivities that affect how the visitor interprets and engages with the museum.[22]

Post-colonialist studies of museum interpretation offer the most complete examinations of the exchange between museums and their communities and the museum's ability to communicate an identity. They position the visitor, the museum, and the subject as co-negotiators of meaning and identity. The nature of museum exhibition is such that, in some cases, the artifacts themselves can play a very small role in the message that is sent or received. An example of the flexibility of material culture in illustrating an ideological narrative is found in Todd Harple's study of the Maori in New Zealand and Mark Bessire's examination of the Sukuma in Tanzania. Harple compares the nineteenth-century illustrated lecture, *Hariru Wikitoria* (Hail Victoria), with the twentieth-century exhibit, *Te Maori*. In the former, a number of Maori people and artifacts were paraded around Europe under a message that exalted the power and virtue of the colonial empire and its mission to civilize and Christianize the Maori people. The mission converts who accompanied the lecturers played the part of the exotic savage. In *Te Maori* the same artifacts were used in an exhibit that showcased the modern New Zealand political movement, *Maoritanga*, emphasizing Maori spirituality, tribalism, language and culture.[23] In light of his example, Harple declares the museum to be a mediator, an arbiter in the negotiation of identity for the Maori.[24] Going

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[22]Ivan Karp, "On Civil Society and Social Identity," in *Museums and Communities*, 21.

[23]Todd S. Harple, "Considering the Maori in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries: The Negotiation of Social Identity in Exhibitory Cultures," *Journal of Arts, Management, and Society* 25:4 (Winter 1996): 295, 303.

[24]Ibid., 292.

one step further, Bessire discusses the museum as a text, citing the example of the Sukuma Museum where the museum building, with a particular set of artifacts, was used first by Catholic missionaries as part of a process of adaptation in support of colonial agendas and then later as a religious and cultural centre for the revitalization of Sukuma living culture.[25] He describes how the museum itself - the building and its contents - and the various interpretations and curatorial voices posited there over the years, are artifacts both of the people and of the time that created them.[26] In both of these examples the artifacts themselves are not important; rather, it is the message that surrounds them that gives them meaning. This is abundantly apparent in Alberta's community museums where, for the most part, the material culture is much the same from one community to another. Thus, it is not the Singer sewing machines, sad irons and walking plows themselves, found in most every small-town collection, that are significant to local identity but instead the message they are used to illustrate. In addition, different museums can send the same message using any number of combinations of artifacts and filling in the gaps in the narrative with replicas, models, written text, graphics, and other exhibit elements. Often it is the textual interpretation and exhibit design, and not the objects at all, that are most powerful in delivering the intended message. In this way, reading the museum as a text explains more about the contemporary values and intentions of those who established it than about the attitudes of those whose lives are ostensibly on display.

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[25]Mark H. Bessire, "History, Context and Identity at the Sukuma Museum," *Museum International* 49:3 (July 1997): 54, 57.

[26]Ibid., 53.

THE PAST FOR THE PRESENT'S SAKE

In *The Past is a Foreign Country*, David Lowenthal notes that, once gone, the past can only be experienced through the present. History, he suggests, is constructed to explain the present by selecting particular historical events and arranging them to tell a particular story.[27] In doing so, museums give meaning to the past using the present.[28] Because of this, the museum tells us more about ourselves, the present curators of the past, than it does about those who lived it.[29] The generic pioneer represents a spirit of adventure, a dominion over the land and a moral individualism that is important to the contemporary Alberta identity. It also serves as a foundation on which to attach current ideas about cultural diversity and celebration. The history that is imagined on this basis is coloured by nostalgia and perpetuated especially when the province experiences rapid growth or significant demographic, economic or social changes. Further, when a generation collectively comes of age, or when a society experiences instability, it begins to imagine that the values and experiences it holds important are being lost and is struck with a desire for immortality. It begins to look with nostalgia upon the past and construct an Eden lost.[30] Because the goal in constructing this Eden is not an accurate portrayal of historical events, historical identities and cultural heritage in the museum are not fixed but adapt to present situations, if necessary altering the past and tradition for that purpose and for their preservation into the future.[31] Lowenthal suggests that

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[27]David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), xxiii.

[28]David Goa, "Avenues of Exploration," in Canadian Museums Association, *Cultural Diversity and Museums,* 18.

[29]Chris Miller-Marti, "Local History Museums and the Creation of 'The Past'," *Muse* 5:2 (Summer 1987): 36.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Goa, 18.

in such nostalgic journeys, "many seem less concerned to find a past than to yearn for it, eager not so much to relive a fancied long-ago as to collect its relics and celebrate its virtues."[32] Because of their usefulness to a current Alberta consciousness, the relics and virtues that Alberta's community museums collect and celebrate are those of the pioneer.

This study examines six Alberta community museums, each interpreting a particular ethnic group and its community's history: the British and Anglo-Canadians at the Museum of the Highwood in High River, the French at the Bonnyville and District Museum in Bonnyville, the Ukrainians at the Basilian Fathers Museum in Mundare, the Mormons at the Court House Museum and C.O. Card Home in Cardston, the Chinese at the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre in Calgary's Chinatown and the Danes at the Danish Canadian National Museum and Gardens near Dickson. By examining these ethnic groups, who share aspects of their history but who also have very different historical experiences, similarity and difference in their museums becomes apparent. Each group is an ethnic community that can trace its heritage to a common region or nation of origin and cultural background that both internally and externally identifies it as distinctive. In many cases a religious heritage is also shared and may be the primary defining feature of that group.

These communities were chosen because each was founded during the settlement boom of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; each was strongly dominated by one ethnic group, although none formed an exclusive community; and, when originally settled, acted as a centre, in some cases the primary centre, for that group. Each ethnic group, however, had a different pioneering experience and a different relationship with mainstream

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[32]Lowenthal, 7.

Alberta society. The British and Anglo-Canadians and the French, as charter groups, constituted the mainstream; the Ukrainians and the Chinese were deliberately marginalized or excluded; the Mormons and the Danes experienced various degrees of integration and assimilation. These relationships with the mainstream have never been static but instead evolve with changing demographics and social priorities. The French, for instance, in the early days of the provincehood, with the British/Anglo Canadian residents of the West, held a privileged place in Alberta society as part of the business, political and social elite, due in no small part to the fact their arrival in the West preceded that of other groups. Overtime, the French position in the mainstream became less prominent only to be reasserted in the latter decades of the twentieth century as an important contributor to what was now a multicultural mainstream, due both to the uniqueness of their cultural heritage and to a new emphasis on national bilingualism. There are also differences in the way each museum deals with the ethnicity of its community. The Museum of the Highwood and the Bonnyville and District Museum both tend to interpret a particular ethnic group because that ethnic group dominates the geographic community they represent. The Basilian Fathers Museum and the Court House Museum and C.O. Card Home represent ethno-religious groups with a strong local geographic element. The Danish Canadian National Museum and Gardens and the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Museum chiefly represent an ethnic group in which the local geography forms a much smaller element of the interpretation.

This study uses as its primary source each museum's exhibits - layout, text, artifacts and other elements. Secondary sources include each museum's buildings, programming and live interpretation, publications and publicity pieces, media coverage, collections and

collecting activities, and governance documents such as mission statements, bylaws and policies. Museum exhibits are fluid and impermanent and, therefore, arguments made here are necessarily based on a specific snapshot of exhibits as staged in the 2002 summer season.[33] At some of the museums the interpretation changes very little from season to season, while at others there is a strong emphasis on temporary exhibits. At each, some element of the interpretation was permanent.[34] Each museum was visited at least twice during 2002, with the major study visit during the summer season.

This study begins by outlining the development of museums in Alberta as the context for the case study museums. It then examines the generic pioneer narrative as it appears in Alberta's community museums, followed by a discussion and analysis of its infusion with ethnic expression in the six selected locations. At each of the latter, the group's settlement story is told using the generic pioneer narrative, while its ethnic identity finds its anchor in the homeland and appears in the museum in similar ways. The differences in the historical experiences and present-day communities of each of these groups do not amount to a significantly different representation in their museums; in fact, when broken down to their constituent parts, the main messages of their exhibits are remarkably similar. Lowenthal suggests that a typical reaction for immigrant populations dislocated and thereby disconnected from their past, is either to "exaggerate attachments to romanticized homelands

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[33]The summer season for most museums runs approximately from Victoria Day weekend in May to Labour Day weekend in September.

[34]As museums' "permanent exhibits" are long term, they are subject to minor changes on a regular basis as functional realities - for example, maintenance concerns, space demands and preventive conservation procedures such as artifact rotation - require that they be altered in slight ways. They maintain, however, the same message and approximately the same look over a long period of time. In some museums the permanent exhibits remain untouched for decades; at others they may be on a regular but multiple year rotation, changing every five years, for example.

or stridently to assert an adoptive belonging."[35] In Alberta many ethnic groups have done both. Through the generic pioneer narrative they firmly assert their place in the mainstream historical narrative by adopting the image of the pioneer. But they also maintain their ethnic distinctiveness and preserve links with the heritage of the homeland by dressing the pioneer, figuratively and literally, in all of the raiments of their present cultural identity. They do this because establishing a shared past leads to a shared present and ensures a shared future.

[35]Lowenthal, 42.

CHAPTER 1

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE ALBERTA MUSEUM COMMUNITY, 1890 - 2002

Alberta's museum movement developed alongside, and as part of, a larger heritage movement that involved individuals, communities and governments in the preservation and interpretation of the past. Seldom the driving force in this process, museums have been more likely to emerge as a result of some other project or the energy arising out of a particular event, anniversary or commemoration. Because of the interdependent nature of the relationship, this discussion will focus on the growth of the museum movement within the context of the larger heritage movement - which is itself reflective of contemporary political, social and economic forces. The mainstream museum movement developed in four overlapping phases, each characterized by its own historical context and motivations, which saw, first, the emergence of the pioneer as the dominant character and mythology, and, second, the evolution of the mainstream museum narrative in an increasingly multicultural direction. The first phase, extending from the last decade of the nineteenth century until the First World War, was marked by an already fading Victorian idea of collecting and exhibition that was scientific, educational and decidedly elitist. The second phase, primarily identified with the interwar years, witnessed the rise of the pioneer and the codification of the Alberta historical narrative in the Anglo-Canadian and French dominated mainstream. The third phase, 1945 - 1970, occurred during a period of rapid change in Alberta's economy and demography, one also marked by a series of significant provincial and national anniversaries that both reflected and affected its historical and ethnic consciousness. The last

and current phase has seen an explosion of community museums together with the democratization or opening up of the mainstream museum movement to different ethnic groups, in large part due to government programs and funding introduced in the 1970s to encourage a multicultural idea of the Canadian polity. The following pages discuss change and continuity within the Alberta museum community from its beginnings to the present, situating the six case studies within this framework.

THE MAINSTREAM MUSEUM MOVEMENT

A FADING ERA: 1890 - 1918

When Alberta became a province in 1905, the settlement boom was still strong and the countryside continued to attract migrants and immigrants from across North America, Europe, and parts of Asia. Most of the province's residents had not been in the West for long and the preoccupations of becoming established in a new place and coping with feelings of displacement and loss were likely far more prominent in their minds than integrating into an Alberta heritage. Nevertheless, a significant segment of the social, political and business elite had already been in the North-West Territories for many years and had started to think in terms of a European Alberta patrimony.[1] After all, European fur traders, mostly French and British in origin, had been a presence in the Alberta region of Rupert's Land for over one hundred years. For example, Anthony Henday of the Hudson's Bay Company had come to the Red Deer River area in 1754 in an attempt to secure direct trade with western Native

[1]The geographic area dealt with throughout this discussion is limited to the borders of present-day Alberta, recognizing that prior to 1905 this area existed under different names. When appropriate, the term North-West Territories or Rupert's Land is used but is generally qualified in the text to denote the area now known as Alberta; if not qualified, it refers to the entire region encompassed by the term.

groups, while Peter Pond of the North West Company established the first relatively permanent post on Lake Athabasca in 1777 to corner the lucrative trade with the Cree and Assiniboine.[2] By 1905, the Oblates of Mary Immaculate, French Catholic missionaries, had established permanent or semi-permanent missions in Alberta for more than sixty years, based at fur trade forts or the Métis communities that serviced the fur trade: for example, Fort Edmonton (1842), Lac Ste. Anne (1843), and St. Albert (1861) under Father Albert Lacombe. The first Methodist missionary, Robert Rundle, arrived at Fort Edmonton in 1840 and his successors, such as George and John McDougall, began evangelizing Native groups in the 1860s. Over the preceding thirty years before provincehood most of the Native population had been placed under treaty; the North-West Mounted Police (NWMP) had established a clear presence; and ranching enterprises had emerged in the 1870s in the south around Calgary at about the same time as the buffalo herds disappeared. Even the settlers and entrepreneurs who had arrived in the wake of the uprising under Louis Riel or the completion of the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) in 1885 had been in the North-West Territories for twenty years. Most of those newcomers came from Ontario or Great Britain, and as such, possessed a sense of ownership and belonging even before they arrived in this part of the British empire. There was also a significant French population, mostly, although not entirely, derived from the fur trade or Roman Catholic missionary activity. Accordingly, by 1905 the mainstream Alberta historical narrative - that of Indians, fur traders, missionaries, police and now pioneers - was already in place. While the last chapter remained incomplete, Anglo and French Albertans had developed a sense of history around

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[2]Gerald Friesen, *The Canadian Prairies: A History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 55-62.

the characters and events that relayed notions about taming the West and creating civilization out of the wilderness. The legitimization of this civilization through the institutions of government and provincehood focussed these ideas and provided an environment in which the heritage movement could grow.

Alberta's first historical organizations were a part of these developments as much in their being as in the history they represented. These organizations, particularly prevalent in and around Calgary, often partnered with science or literature societies designed to bring English ideas of refinement and high society from Britain or eastern Canada to the prairies. The fact that nearly all such societies were located in the southern part of the province is partially explained by the ambitions of southern Alberta's ranching elite. For many in this group, often eastern Canadian entrepreneurs who came west to exploit economic opportunities, club life and the pursuit of high culture were part of defining themselves as a new regional elite in light of the probable newness of their wealth and position.[3] There was also an influential minority of wealthy and well-born Britons and Ontarians, often the younger children of established families, for whom maintaining the cultural traditions of English gentility was akin to maintaining a social standard.[4] In this vein, a number of historical societies were formed in the 1880s, beginning with Fort Macleod in 1884. The Historical and Scientific Society of Alberta in Calgary, with Father Lacombe as president,

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[3]Paul Voisey, "In Search of Wealth and Status: An Economic and Social Study of Entrepreneurs in Early Calgary," in *Frontier Calgary: Town, City and Region, 1875-1914,* ed. Anthony W. Rasporich and Henry C. Klassen (Calgary: University of Calgary, 1975), 237. An exception to the Calgary-centric nature of this first phase is the Edmonton Old Timers' Association, established in 1893 but fitting more properly within the second phase of the museum movement when it was much more active. The Edmonton Old Timers' Association is an ideal example of how these phases were not rigidly time based; instead, they represent a period dominated by a particular focus.

[4]David H. Breen, *The Canadian West and the Ranching Frontier: 1874 - 1924* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983), 12-14.

followed in 1885; a second Calgary group in 1886; the Calgary Historical Society in 1902; and the Scientific and Historical Society of Lethbridge in 1888.[5] Most of these societies shared a focus on literature, science, and natural history. These themes, particularly the latter, also preoccupied Alberta's first museums.

Alberta's museum movement had its modest beginnings not long after the settlement of the North-West Territories began in earnest. These first museums had many parallels to the type favoured by both private collectors and the first generation of public museums in Europe and Britain, reflecting the 'cabinet of curiosities' tradition that amassed and displayed magnificent works of art alongside objects from antiquity and the natural world: Dutch masters alongside Egyptian mummies and unicorn horns, for example. Although often of questionable authenticity (the unicorn horns were generally rhinoceros horns or narwhale tusks), these objects served as a basis for more scholarly collections that developed in tandem with the cachet of science following from the progress of the industrial revolution, Victorian ideals of education, and the publication of Darwin's *Origin of Species*.[6] This shift in thinking

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[5]Hugh A. Dempsey, "Four Early Alberta Historians," *Alberta History* 45:2 (Spring 1997): 2-3; and Hugh A. Dempsey, "Historical Society of Calgary," *Alberta History* 45:3 (Summer 1997): 4. The Fort Macleod group was called the Literary, Scientific and Historical Society and the 1886 Calgary group the Calgary Institute of Literature, Science and History. Dempsey suggests that the primary function of these societies was literary and that they were not operational for a significant period of time. The 1902 Calgary Historical Society appears to have lasted for only a few years but a similar organization was created more than twenty years later by many of the same people. Also established during this era was the Calgary Old Timers' Association in 1901, later to become the Southern Alberta Pioneers and Descendants Association; see Southern Alberta Pioneers and Their Descendants, "About Us," *Southern Alberta Pioneers and Their Descendants*, www.pioneersalberta.org/about_us.html (accessed 17 December 2002); and Sir Alexander Galt Museum and Archives, "About the Galt. History and Facts," *Sir Alexander Galt Museum and Archives*, www.galtmuseum.com/index.htm (accessed 23 January 2003).

[6]On the history of museums in the western world, especially Canada, see the following: Edward P. Alexander, *Museums in Motion: An Introduction to the History and Functions of Museums* (Nashville: American Association for State and Local History, 1979), 5-10, 41-46; Michael M. Ames, *Cannibal Tours and Glass Boxes: The Anthropology of Museums* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1992), 15-25; Robyn Gilliam, *Hall of Mirrors: Museums and the Canadian Public* (Banff: The Banff Centre Press, 2001), 1-44; and Archie Keys, *Beyond Four Walls: The Origins and Development of Canadian Museums* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973), 42-55.

corresponded with a demand for "acceptable" activities combining education and amusement to satisfy an emergent middle class possessing more "leisure, wealth, physical mobility and educational opportunity than ever before."[7] Enjoying a new popularity, natural history museums in particular came to be conceived as centres for scientific education, through the ordered and classified arrangement of natural specimens. Alberta's first museums were also primarily natural history collections and their forays into human history, as a rule, were limited to 'curiosities': ancient treasures, rare coins, medals, weapons and artifacts from 'primitive' or 'exotic' cultures. The latter included 'Indian artifacts' from the Canadian West.

Two museums opened in Alberta in the 1890s, both resulting from the efforts of individuals whose occupations lent to an appreciation of science. The Rocky Mountain Park Museum in the town of Banff, a Canadian government initiative, opened in 1895 as part of the Dominion's first national park, began with specimens collected by John Macoun in conjunction with the Dominion Geological Survey assembled to inventory and organize knowledge of the Park's ecology.[8] The collection's early development, care, and display was dominated by the work and passion for the Rocky Mountains of its curator, Norman Bethune Sanson, the son of a Toronto Anglican minister, who came to Banff in 1892 following

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[7]Susan Sheets-Pyenson, *Cathedrals of Science: The Development of Colonial Natural History Museums during the Late Nineteenth Century* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press,1988), 4.

[8]J. Lynne Teather, "Museum Making in Canada (to 1972)," *Muse* 10:2/3 (Summer/Fall 1992): 25; Karen Wonders, "A Sportsman's Eden, Part 2: A Wilderness Besieged," *Beaver* 79:6 (December 1999): 37; and Parks Canada, "Banff Park Museum," *Parks Canada*, www.worldweb.com/parkscanada-banff/museum.html (accessed 20 November 2002). There is significant variation in reporting the dates when the museum, in its various stages, opened. The dates used here reflect those favoured by Parks Canada. Determining which museum, the Banff Museum or the George Museum, was established first is difficult, as it becomes a matter of identifying the point at which a collection came to be called a museum. Most sources put the Banff museum first, as its collection was begun, and stored, in Banff following John Macoun's visit in 1891.

military service in Battleford during the Riel uprising. Sanson, who also kept the Park's weather station, saw the museum relocate twice before settling into its present building, a unique structure built of Douglas fir in the style of an English hunting lodge, in 1903.[9] The second museum in the Alberta area opened in Innisfail in the home of Dr. Henry George who had immigrated from Britain with his wife Barbara in 1889, coming to the West as a physician with the NWMP. He charged twenty-five cents to view his private collection of "Indian artifacts, stamp[s] and coin[s,] . . . weapons, curios and stuffed birds and animals," as well as to see the plants and wildflowers Barbara had pressed or painted in watercolour. In 1907 the Georges moved their family and their museum to Red Deer, where they built a two-story brick addition to their home to accommodate the collection.[10] Dr. George's declining health forced the museum's closure in the 1920s when the couple relocated to Victoria. Some of the collection went to service clubs in Red Deer and area but the bulk was given to the museum in the Calgary public library after the province declined George's offer to donate it to the people of Alberta. Eventually some pieces, including Mrs. George's watercolours, were acquired by the Glenbow Foundation.[11] Another collector in this tradition

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[9]Theresa E. Thomson, "One Thousand Climbs to Breakfast," *Alberta Historical Review* 22:1 (Winter 1974): 14; and Adrianna Albi Davies, "Museum Development in Canada's Prairie Provinces: Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta," *Muse* 10:2/3 (Summer /Fall 1992): 129.

[10]Georgean C. Parker, *Proud Beginnings: A Pictorial History of Red Deer* (Red Deer: Red Deer and District Museum Society, 1981), 99-100; Innisfail and District Historical Society, *Innisfail: 75 Years a Town, 1903-1978* (Innisfail: Innisfail and District Historical Society, 1978), 4-5; and Southern Alberta Pioneers and Their Descendants, "Pioneer Profiles," *Southern Alberta Pioneers and Their Descendants,* www.pioneersalberta.org/profiles/g.html (accessed 20 November 2002). Quote from Parker.

[11]Sue Baptie, "The Case of the Missing Museum," *Glenbow: A Newsletter of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute* 5:6 (November/December 1972): 6-7; Allissa Fletcher, "Innisfail Historical Village: History," *Innisfail Historical Society,* http://users.rttinc.com/~idhs (accessed 20 November 2002); *Innisfail*, 5; Parker, 99-100; and Mark Rasmussen, "The Heritage Boom: Evolution of Historical Resource Conservation in Alberta," *Prairie Forum* 15:2 (Fall 1990): 236. The Georges' home was purchased by the Kemp family who ran it as a boarding house until the 1960s. It is now a museum, preserved as the Dr. George / Kemp House, and interpreted as the Georges' home in the 1920s. It still houses pieces from the original collection.

was W.B. Gray, a police magistrate in Stettler, who had begun acquiring artifacts and curios from around the world in the 1880s, paying special attention to military artifacts and natural history specimens. He also displayed his collection in his home, built in 1910, complementing it with a small zoo in the back yard.[12] The Banff, George, and Gray collections were exceptional in their size, but many Alberta residents and societies would have owned similar collections which, in later years, often found their way into larger museums.

The Calgary Natural History and Arts Museum was the destination for many of these private collections after it opened in 1911 under the auspices of the Calgary Natural History Society in the new Central Park Public Library. This museum, whose mostly natural history collection was organized into departments curated by amateur naturalists, received substantial support from members of Calgary's elite.[13] R.B. Bennett, who would become Canada's prime minister during the Great Depression, and Colonel W.J.F. Walker of the NWMP, an influential and active citizen in Calgary, are examples of those who lobbied the local government for funding on its behalf. The museum's collections and exhibits also reflected the interests of prominent Albertans like the Reverend John McDougall, who supervised the "Indian arts and crafts" section, and Eileen Burns, the wife of entrepreneur Patrick Burns of Burns Meats, who lent her own materials for its inaugural exhibition.[14] This museum, too, moved several times before dissolving in the 1940s, apparently a victim of municipal neglect and public apathy.[15] While focussing primarily on natural history and fine

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[12]Judy Larmour, *Judge William Brigham Gray of Stettler* (Stettler: Stettler Town and Country Museum, 1999), 22-30.

[13]Wonders, 35.

[14]Baptie, 6.

[15]Baptie suggests that Henry George's "entire natural history collection"(7) was part of the 7,500 artifacts that eventually went missing when that museum disbanded.

arts, it appears to have made some effort to represent the pioneer. When interested parties cast lots for the collection after the municipal government turned it down, the Calgary Brewing and Malting Company obtained a few unidentified "Pioner [*sic*] items" for its Horseman's Hall of Fame.[16] The gradual appearance of the pioneer in the Calgary Natural History and Arts Museum reflected a shift in the focus of the museum community in Canada more generally, so that around the time of the First World War the pioneer became the driving topic for many museums.[17] The Calgary museum's shift toward interpreting the pioneer and away from nature and the idea of the museum as an elitist social activity and an institution of scientific study was more expressive of the popular conception of Alberta's heritage.

The collection of natural history specimens continued, but an overwhelming and lasting transition in the community museum to human history, with a particular focus on the local community, coincided with the close of the first phase in Alberta museum development. The few museums it had generated were effectively remnants of a fading idea of what a museum was. Already in the waning decades of the nineteenth century, and as early as the 1860s in the major cities of Ontario and Quebec, the popularity of natural history museums was being replaced by a tendency to regard museums not as scientific institutions but as cultural bodies. This tendency was articulated in the creation of museums and historical societies dedicated to history and the arts.[18] As Canada began to envision itself as a nation, political institutions and settlement became more appropriate expressions of the new country

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[16]Baptie, 6-7.

[17]Teather, 26. Each province or region had its own schedule for this shift, depending on its particular current events and social changes, but the move from natural history to a glorification of community founders or pioneers occurred across the country. Also consistent from province to province was an increase in community museums following the First World War.

[18]Ibid.

than nature and wilderness. Even with their firm roots in science, Alberta's earliest museums showed how a significant thrust of their purpose was educational and cultural. In the case of the Rocky Mountain Park Museum, tourism and nation building also figured prominently in its development; these factors, together with the benefits of a high profile and high traffic location, stability as a government-run institution, and a long-lived curator, ensured its survival in the long term. As it was, the Rocky Mountain Park Museum was more or less abandoned in its original state, perhaps to the benefit of posterity as it now serves as a "museum of a museum" and survives as an illustration of scientific Victorian collecting.[19] Its contemporaries, less fortunate, disappeared in the wake of evolving priorities; as examples of the wonders of the natural world, their collections fell out of fashion with a society that was more interested in remembering the conquering of the land and the building of civilization than learning about the region's ecology.

Alberta's recognition of the importance of museums in creating a new political identity was articulated very early after becoming a province. Only one month after the Alberta-Saskatchewan Act came into effect, Professor George Harcourt, the new provincial minister of agriculture (the department then responsible for cultural affairs) suggested that Alberta establish a provincial museum "for the preservation of the relics and landmarks associated with the early days of the west."[20] Two years later, the Historical Society of Alberta Act was unanimously passed by the Alberta Legislature, establishing the Historical Society of Alberta (HSA) "to rescue from oblivion the memories of the original inhabitants,

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[19]Parks Canada, www.worldweb.com/parkscanada-banff/museum.html (accessed 20 November 2002).

[20]"A Museum in 1905?" *Glenbow: A Publication of the Glenbow-Alberta Institute* 7:2 (March/April 1974): 4.

the early missionaries, fur traders, explorers, and settlers of the north and west of Canada."[21] It was also mandated to establish a museum. Although the HSA would never fulfill the latter obligation, sometime after it was formed the Legislature Building itself became home to a number of exhibits, mostly of arrowheads and taxidermic specimens that were, at the time, considered the starting point for a future provincial museum.[22] While not particularly impressive, the murmur of heritage activity around the period of the province's inauguration represented, if nothing else, an acknowledgment in principle of a public will to preserve and remember the past. These modest initiatives also signalled the birth pangs of the second phase of the museum movement dominated by the pioneer.

THE PIONEER ASCENDANT: 1919 - 1945

Attempts to build a historical movement in Alberta prior to the First World War were sporadic and fleeting. Often the result of personal campaigns by members of Alberta's Anglo and French elite, the historical societies or museums that emerged lacked the critical mass needed to sustain them over time. Organizations like the HSA that did manage to survive experienced several reincarnations and periods of dormancy. Most showed little continuous activity, instead beginning with a flurry of enthusiasm and anticipation only to fade or disappear during the second decade of the twentieth century - few leaving much evidence of ever having existed. The preoccupations of the war effort hobbled an already fledgling movement and no new museums or historical societies appear to have been

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[21]"An Act to Incorporate the Historical Society of Alberta," *Statutes of the Province of Alberta* (Edmonton: Jas E. Richards, Government Printer, 1907), 354. Popularly known as The Historical Society Act.

[22]Rasmussen, 236-237.

established during the war years.[23]

Canada's participation in the war, however, heralded a new phase in the museum movement, responding to a strengthened sense of nationhood in English Canada at having passed through a rite of passage. In 1919, this sentiment, plus agitation from historical organizations in eastern Canada, prompted the federal government to establish the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada (HSMBC) in recognition of the need to preserve and commemorate a national history. The Board tended to focus on eastern Canada, so that western historical activists generally felt excluded from its activities and priorities, but the timing of its establishment parallelled a renewal of historical energy in Alberta as well.[24] By the 1920s, old ideas were being rekindled through the HSA, which underwent the first of its reorganizations in 1919, while other groups embarked on more serious efforts to establish museums and launch related heritage projects. A handful of Alberta communities had already established pioneer organizations - most notably the Edmonton Old Timers (1893) and the Calgary Old Timers (1901) - but their function remained more social than historical until the 1920s. The Edmonton group had, however, organized a parade profiling Alberta's early history and personalities for the province's inauguration. In 1924 the Northern Alberta Old Timers' Association (NAOTA) held a reorganizational meeting dedicating the Association to "the Preservation of the early history of the settlement and the social and friendly relations of the Pioneers of the district," and opening its membership to all

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[23]Museum listings compiled by author. See Appendix for the complete list and references.

[24]C.J. Taylor, *Negotiating the Past: The Making of Canada's National Historic Parks and Sites* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 30-31.

Edmonton and area residents who had come to the North-West Territories prior to 1890.[25] For the first time this also included women, and it was noted that "quite a number of the fairer sex have placed their names on the roll."[26] Although primarily a social club, in 1925, in the spirit of preservation, the NAOTA moved Frank Oliver's original *Edmonton Bulletin* office, donated by then Mayor Kenneth Alexander Blatchford, to the Edmonton Exhibition Grounds. Beginning in 1926, it opened the building and an adjacent log cabin, which housed a museum, to the public during the Exhibition.[27]

At this point, the Alberta museum and historical movements, like the province's social, political, and economic structures in general, were dominated by an Ontario- and British-born elite.[28] Nevertheless, the French presence should not be overlooked, as it was not represented through separate parallel initiatives but integrated into the mainstream movements. There is little evidence that the French, while fewer in number, occupied an inferior position in the historical community, in large part, no doubt, because the mainstream narrative relied heavily on its fur trade and missionary beginnings, where the French played an often dominant role. The French in Alberta were also members of mainstream historical

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[25]Eva A. McKitrick, *A History of the Northern Alberta Pioneers and Old Timers Association, 1894-1983* (Edmonton: Northern Alberta Pioneers and Old Timers Association, 1984), 3.

[26]Ibid, 17. The organization changed the rules for membership a number of times as older generations aged and passed away and restrictions on membership came to be limiting. Reflecting these changes, the association's name also changed a number of times; since 1983 it has been known as the Northern Alberta Pioneers and Descendants Association.

[27]Hugh Dempsey, *Historic Sites of the Province of Alberta* (Edmonton: Department of Economic Affairs, Publicity Bureau, 1952), 22-23; and McKitrick, 30-48. In 1946 the NAOTA built new premises, the Relics Building, "to hold and display the relics and vehicles"(35). In 1959 the artifacts were moved to an exhibit "on the ground floor of the old civic block"(45). The following year the collection was transferred to the new City of Edmonton Archives (CEA). In 1966, when quarters there became cramped, it was turned over to the City and dispersed among storage, the CEA, the John Walter Museum, and Fort Edmonton Park.

[28]Howard Palmer, "Strangers and Stereotypes: The Rise of Nativism, 1880-1920," in *The Prairie West: Historical Readings,* ed. R. Douglas Francis and Howard Palmer (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1995), 308-312.

organizations like the HSA and the NAOTA and French communities became involved in historical preservation. In 1927 in St. Albert, for example, a brick building to encase Father Lacombe's 1861 log chapel and a monument to the influential cleric were erected. The move to preserve and commemorate the chapel and Lacombe involved a partnership among the Oblates and the citizens of St. Albert as the driving force and other Albertans and government representatives such as Mayor Ambrose Bury of Edmonton and Senator Prosper-Edmond Lessard. For a period of time the chapel served as a museum, displaying artifacts of personal significance to Lacombe as well as to the development of the mission and the community of St. Albert. The pioneer experiences of the Oblates and the communities they ministered to were represented through religious items and homestead artifacts such as handmade plow blades and cooking utensils.[29]

The chapel is especially significant as it shows a province-wide recognition of the significance of Father Albert Lacombe, widely considered one of Alberta's most prominent pioneers, and a desire to preserve evidence of his work. The community assisted in building the ensconce, and the ceremony that opened the museum and unveiled the plaque was led by Patrick Burns, Calgary meat packing mogul, who was described as "Lacombe's oldest, truest and dearest friend."[30] There is no doubt, however, that Lacombe was seen as belonging to the French community. As the Quebec MP and relative of the priest, the Honourable Ligouri Lacombe, who was present at the ceremony, stated: "Quebec is proud that she gave birth to

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[29]Father A. Tetreault, "Historic St. Albert: Transformation and Highlights (1890 - 1954)," *Alberta Historical Review* 5:1 (Winter 1957), 27. In 2002 the chapel was provincially run.

[30]Ibid., 26. Burns was also involved in a number of "Old West" themed activities that could not quite be considered historical, such as Banff's Indian Days with Norman Luxton; in 1912 he was also one of the four founding partners of the Calgary Stampede.

such a man."[31] Yet the commemoration of Lacombe was equally a mainstream event in which ethnicity was irrelevant. Speaking on behalf of the Old Timers' Association of Southern Alberta, Harold Riley declared: "The foundation of our nation was laid by such pioneers as Father Lacombe. It is for those who come after to build on this solid foundation by following his example."[32] Events such as these show not only the close-knit nature of Alberta's elite community but also that it, and its historical consciousness, included both of Canada's European founding cultures.

In the interwar period it became clear that Alberta's mainstream historical narrative would be driven by the pioneer. The nature and intent of this narrative are well illustrated by Ernest Brown's Pioneer Days Museum which opened in Edmonton in Haddon Hall on 97 Street north of Jasper Avenue in 1933.[33] Born in Yorkshire, England, Brown was an early and influential photographer whose interest in history and education resulted in an unsurpassed visual record of Edmonton and area bridging the fur trade and settlement eras. Brown's museum began as a large portable exhibit entitled the *Birth of the West* displayed at venues like the Edmonton Exhibition and Johnston Walker and Eaton's department stores before it was moved into a more permanent space. It had a decidedly educational objective and was geared towards children, who were encouraged to handle the artifacts as part of what Brown called the object teaching method which he proposed would have a greater impact on

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[31]Ibid., 28. The Old Timers' Association of Southern Alberta was the name used by the SAPDA at the time.

[32]Ibid.

[33]"Pioneer Days Again On View," *Edmonton Journal* (September 30, 1933); "Department Store Presents 'Frontier Days' Exhibition," ibid. (May 15, 1934); and "Educational Museum Proves Popular With Thousands of City's Children," ibid. (February 5, 1938). See Ernest Brown Manuscript Collection, files 65.124/163a and 65.124/172b, Provincial Archives of Alberta (PAA), Edmonton, AB.

the child's mind by engaging each of his or her senses. Brown also contended that the museum's popularity with children had the additional social advantage of "[keeping] boys off the street and away from 'corner gangs,'"[34] while both his lessons in the museum and his Teaching Pictures series promised to "inculcate a healthy Canadianism."[35]

In practical terms, the museum's exhibits told the story of the West using the following themes and sub-themes:

> MISSIONARIES AND EXPLORERS: Selkirk Settlers, Red River Rebellion, Story of the coming of the Mounted Police . . .
> STORY OF THE BUFFALO: Early Ranching, Pioneer Towns, Building of the C.P.R., Riel Rebellion, Indians, Eskimos, Totems, Wampum, Maori Relics
> FOUNDERS OF FORT EDMONTON:
> The coming of the White Man.
> EDMONTON SCHOOL HISTORY.[36]

While Brown's logic in creating these groupings is not easy to determine, this narrative contained all the elements that many other mainstream pioneer museums would use to construct their pioneer mythology, later adding the world wars to the time-line. The obviously extraneous elements - the Maori relics, for example - were left over from the tradition of exhibiting curiosities from exotic cultures, but otherwise the unspoken theme was that of conquering the land with its corollary of the subversion of the Native peoples. When a portion of the exhibit was displayed in an Edmonton department store in 1933, the *Edmonton Journal* described its message in glowing terms:

> Pioneers appear in all phases of settlement, it is of course the principal theme of the exhibition, but the intimacies, the hardships, the struggles and the victories depicted mark the heroic character of these men and women whom

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[34]"Educational Museum Proves Popular With Thousands of City's Children," *Edmonton Journal* (February 5, 1938). See Brown Collection, file 65.124/163a, PAA.

[35]Ibid., file 65.124/159b.

[36]Ibid., file 65.124/156a. Emphasis original.

> nothing could daunt in their endeavour to bend the resources of nature to man's use. The success of their efforts is only too well evidenced in the results apparent at this show.[37]

The *Frontier Days* exhibit placed in Eaton's the following year evoked similar accolades:

> The exhibition is thought to be the most complete of its kind in these parts and tells a vivid tale of the march of progress and the opening up of the great northwest on the heels of the first intrepid explorers, who penetrated, under untold suffering and hardship, the naked winds of the plain and the tangled brush of other districts to lead the way for white man's methods of life.[38]

Ernest Brown's Pioneer Days Museum lasted until 1939. Brown hoped the collection might serve as the base for a provincial museum and negotiated for several years with both the HSA and the provincial government; in 1947, four years before his death, the collection was acquired by the government of Alberta.[39]

With the outbreak of the Second World War the heritage movement was once again displaced, this time both physically and as a priority in the minds of its proponents. For example, the space Brown used for his museum in Haddon Hall was needed for the war effort and in 1939 the collection moved into storage at Government House. The use of the Relics Building by the Royal Canadian Air Force forced the closure of the NAOTA museum from 1942 to 1945; the Association also suspended its summer meetings to save gas and tires.[40] Unlike the first phase of museum development, however, where the First World War permitted a weak heritage movement to naturally fade away, by now it had gained enough

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[37]"Pioneer Days Again On View," *Edmonton Journal* (September 30, 1933). See ibid., file 65.124/163a.

[38]"Department Store Presents 'Frontier Days' Exhibition," *Edmonton Journal* (May 15, 1934). See ibid., file 65.124/163a.

[39]Letter from Everard Edmonds of the HSA to Ernest Brown, 24 April 1939. See ibid., file 65.124/156c.

[40]Letter from Ernest Brown to Miss Alice Lunn, secretary to W. B. Gray, 2 September 1946. See ibid., file 65.124/157; and McKitrick, 21, 35.

momentum that the Second World War simply put activities on hold. Both the HSA and the NAOTA resumed regular meetings after the war ended and, in 1946, the NAOTA constructed a new building to house its growing "relics" collection. The pioneer narrative too persisted into the third phase of museum development, carried by the movement's reinvigorated and focussed energy.

COMMEMORATION AND ANNIVERSARY: 1945 - 1970

In the period after the war little changed in terms of both what was presented and who was involved, although changes in Alberta's society and economy invigorated the heritage movement with an increase in spending and a strong sense of nostalgia. On 13 February 1947 Imperial Oil successfully tapped the Leduc oil fields and Alberta's economy and population exploded. Almost overnight oil surpassed agriculture in economic importance, Edmonton and Calgary surpassed Winnipeg as the growth centres of the West (becoming the fastest growing cities in Canada) and provincial revenues rose from approximately $45 million in 1947 to $250 million in 1957, benefiting Albertans through new schools, roads, hospitals, and the wholesale improvement and expansion of government facilities and services.[41] Rapid change almost certainly increases nostalgia, however, and as agriculture fell from prominence and young people chose to earn their living in urban centres rather than on the family farm, some Albertans, and particularly rural Albertans, looked with new fondness on the past. The desire for permanence and stability, as well as the new and more

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[41]Eric J. Hanson, *Dynamic Decade: The Evolution and Effects of the Oil Industry in Alberta* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1958), 1-16, 249, 270-289; Henry C. Klassen, *A Business History of Alberta* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1999), 125-127, 145-147; and Kenneth H. Norrie, "A Regional Economic Overview of the West Since 1945," in *The Prairie West: Historical Readings*, 697-698.

comfortable economic reality, fed a heritage movement that, during this period, was characterized by three themes: continuity, the commemoration of anniversaries and large-scale private legacy.

Between 1945 and 1970 the nature and content of the heritage movement remained ethnically exclusive, the domain of the Anglo and French mainstream, with the Ukrainian and Mormon communities the two exceptions. The Ukrainian museum movement in Canada, which had begun in the interwar period, driven by its own agenda, saw four museums opened in Alberta in the 1950s: a traditional Ukrainian cottage in Elk Island National Park; the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada Arts and Crafts Museum in Edmonton; the Basilian Fathers Museum in Mundare; and toward the end of the decade, the Shandro Ukrainian Historical and Pioneer Village near the village of Willingdon. In Cardston, building on a long-standing tradition of erecting monuments to the pioneers, a museum for Mormon pioneers was opened in the home of the Mormon patriarch, Charles Ora Card, in 1962. Otherwise, until the Canadian Centennial in 1967 encouraged ethnic participation in mainstream initiatives, new museum ventures in Alberta represented the same Anglo and French communities, themes, and characters (Indians, fur traders, missionaries, police and pioneers) that had dominated the previous phase of museum development. The museums opened prior to 1967 include: the Luxton Museum in Banff in 1951; the Historic John McDougall Church in Morley and the George McDougall Memorial Church in Edmonton in 1953; the Medicine Hat Museum and Art Gallery in 1954; the Fort Museum in Fort Macleod in 1957; the Lac Ste. Anne Historical Society Pioneer Museum in 1959; the John Walter Museum in Edmonton, the Museum of the Highwood in High River

and Historic Dunvegan in 1961; the Barr Colony Heritage Cultural Centre in Lloydminster in 1963; and the Sir Alexander Galt Museum and Archives in Lethbridge in 1964.[42] In total, at least forty-two of the approximately forty-nine museums that opened between 1945 and 1970 interpreted the pioneer.[43]

Some of these museums, like their predecessors, benefited from the loan or donation of major private collections but two new museums amplified this trend considerably when Alberta's two largest private collectors, Stanley Reynolds and Eric L. Harvie, opened their collections to the public in 1955 and 1966 respectively. Alberta-born Reynolds utilized his business interests in vehicle sales and aviation to amass a collection of automobiles, airplanes, tractors and a diverse variety of other objects as the basis for the Western Canadian Pioneer Museum opened in his hometown of Wetaskiwin in 1955.[44] Colonel Harvie, born in Ontario and a lawyer by training, made millions in the Alberta oil field and used his fortune to support numerous philanthropic causes, including his own Glenbow Foundation founded in 1954 with instructions to his staff to "collect like a bunch of drunken sailors."[45] His museum would open in the old court house building in Calgary in 1966 and later move

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[42]Museum listings compiled by author. See Appendix for the complete list and references. Museum names used here are those current in 2003. Some of these museums have changed their names since they opened.

[43]The museums that did not primarily interpret the pioneer were the Arctic Institute of North America (exploration/geography, 1945), the Calgary Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry Regimental Museum (military, 1954), the Luxton Museum (aboriginals, natural history and art, 1951), the Alberta Sports Hall of Fame (sport, 1961), two University of Alberta museums (geology, 1956; and dentistry, 1963) and the Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum (military, 1967). See Alberta Museums Association, *Directory of Alberta Museums & Related Organizations, 1997-1998* (Edmonton: Alberta Museums Association, 1997), 2, 7, 23, 45.

[44]Government of Alberta, "Alberta Order of Excellence: Stanley George Reynolds, CM," *Office of the Lieutenant Governor, Province of Alberta,* www.lieutenantgovernor.ab.ca/aoe/bio/reynolds.htm (accessed 8 July 2003).

[45]Fred M. Diehl, *A Gentleman from a Fading Age* (N.p., 1989), 17-30; and Hugh Dempsey, *Treasures of the Glenbow Museum* (Calgary: Glenbow-Alberta Institute, 1991), 14. Quote from Dempsey.

to a large modern facility on Stephen Avenue. Both Reynolds and Harvie left an invaluable legacy, donating their impressive collections to the people of Alberta as the foundations for the world-class Reynolds-Alberta and Glenbow Museums.

Anniversaries, however, proved to be the greatest impetus to museum development during this period, with two events, Alberta's Golden Jubilee in 1955 and Canada's Centennial in 1967, driving the heritage movement. The leadership of both provincial and federal governments in the commemoration of these anniversaries stimulated community-based initiatives in two major ways: by raising the profile and importance of history, and, more effectively, by providing funding for heritage projects. The number of people interested in history also increased. For example, the membership of the HSA almost tripled in two years, from 363 in 1954 to 950 in 1956.[46] Having undergone a second reorganization and under an energetic new leadership, the HSA found some success in its role as a lobby and unofficial advisory group to the provincial government. Most significantly, two years prior to the Golden Jubilee the Alberta government decided to act on HSA suggestions for a network of provincial highway signs marking sites of historical interest. It also pledged funds and publishing assistance to the HSA's new quarterly, the *Alberta Historical Review*. In 1955 the provincial government backed its commitment to heritage with a $25,000 budget; by beginning to buy and designate significant fur trade, mission and 1885 rebellion sites; and, by establishing the Government Historical Committee to gather suggestions from citizens for anniversary projects. After 1955 the Committee was charged with studying the possibility of a long-term policy for "the preservation and restoration of historic sites and monuments

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[46]Everand Edmonds, "Notes and Comments, Annual Meeting," *Alberta Historical Review* 5:2 (Spring 1957): 30.

in Alberta."[47] The province also provided backing for community-initiated projects such as the reconstruction of Fort Macleod and, together with the Knights of Columbus, the St. Charles Mission at Dunvegan.

Prior to 1967 any federal impact on the Alberta heritage movement was minimal. The HSMBC continued its commemoration activities, designating a number of historic sites within Alberta, but organizations such as the HSA remained unimpressed with the rate of its activity.[48] The Canadian Centennial, however, produced a flood of projects that profoundly affected the Canadian heritage scene. More than a decade earlier Ottawa had convened the Royal Commission on the Arts, Sciences, and Letters (popularly known as the Massey/Levesque Commission) whose mandate included museums, historical societies and other heritage groups. Following from its recommendations the federal government made museums a major priority, and eventually a major recipient of Centennial funding.[49] In cooperation with the provinces, the Centennial Commission distributed over $23 million across the country to community-based heritage projects and $50 million to large-scale museum and gallery projects - of which the Provincial Museum of Alberta (PMA) in Edmonton was one.[50] Because of the excitement and energy generated by these initiatives,

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[47]Rasmussen, 240-241. The properties purchased were White Earth Post, Fort Vermillion and the Frog Lake Massacre site (1955); St. Charles Mission at Dunvegan (1956); and Fort George and Fort Victoria (1960).

[48]Hugh Dempsey, "Notes and Comments, Historic Sites," *Alberta Historical Review* 7:4 (Autumn 1959): 31; and C.J. Taylor, "Some Early Problems of the Historic Sites and Monuments Board of Canada," *Canadian Historical Review* 64:1 (March 1983): 3-5.

[49]Vincent Massey, et al., *Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters and Sciences* (Ottawa: King's Printer, 1951), xi.

[50]Teather, 27-28. The Centennial Commission also provided funds to the Canadian Museums Association to establish a secretariat and professional programs in Ottawa. Community-based heritage projects, 150 in total, included museums, galleries, historic building and village restorations, cultural centres, exhibitions, aquariums, planetariums and botanical gardens.

related programs and events like Expo 67, the world fair in Montreal, the Centennial "kindled a cultural revolution throughout the country. Suddenly, there was interest and pride in Canadian heritage and the arts."[51] This climate made it viable for individuals and groups outside the mainstream or unconnected with the existing heritage community to open museums. For instance, Alberta communities dominated by Scandinavian groups had no museums until 1967 when Camrose, Viking and Lougheed opened museums. In the years following the Centennial, museums continued to open across Alberta with Centennial funds, and, with the momentum gained from other centennial projects, such as local history books, many other groups joined the Anglos and the French in museum making.[52] In total, between 1945 and 1970 the number of museums in Alberta increased five fold from less than a dozen to over sixty, making the period a significant one in the history of the heritage movement in the province.

GOVERNMENTS AND MULTICULTURALISM: 1970 - 2002

As Alberta moved into the 1970s the rapid changes of the 1950s were duplicated and amplified through another oil boom and population explosion, triggering another bout of nostalgia, particularly among Albertans from rural pioneer communities. An aging interwar generation, and a sense of alienation in the West as Alberta and Ottawa clashed over the management of the province's oil and gas resources combined to promote romantic memories of a rural golden era. Yet once again, oil enriched the provincial treasury, enabling

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[51]John A. McAvity, "Working Together to Create a Strong Community," *Muse* 10:2/3 (Summer/Fall 1992): 17.

[52]Joanne A. Stiles, "Descended from Heros: The Frontier Myth in Rural Alberta," *Alberta* 2:2 (1990): 29.

the government to increase its funding to provincial institutions and community groups. The most significant and lasting change in this fourth and current phase of museum development was the direct intervention of government in the fields of heritage and culture. From 1970 to the present, government legislation, programs and funding have steered the museum movement as it moved in more democratic and, as a result, multicultural directions. The Alberta Heritage Act, passed in 1970, dealt with operating the PMA, marking and preserving historic sites and setting up a small granting program.[53] That same year the government created a Public Advisory Committee on the Conservation of Historical and Archeological Resources and began holding meetings with stakeholder heritage and community groups across the province. Stemming from these meetings, the 1973 Alberta Heritage Act made two significant changes, giving the government the authority to protect and develop sites, and establishing a professional staff to do the work. By the mid-1970s the Alberta government had created a legislative package described by Mark Rasmussen, of the Historic Resources Division of Alberta Culture and Multiculturalism, as "easily the most progressive in the country" in terms of preservation.[54] Since 1980, a *Master Plan for the Protection and Development of Prehistoric and Historic Resources within Alberta* has guided provincial preservation and heritage decisions, although a new master plan is currently under development.

The action that had the greatest impact on community museums, however, was the commitment of public funds to their development and maintenance. In 1974 and 1975 a provincially administered Museums Assistance Program provided matching funding to

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[53]Rasmussen, 248.

[54]Ibid., 249.

eligible museums, while the following year the Alberta Historical Resources Foundation began distributing lottery monies to heritage projects, including, since 1984, the Alberta Museums Association's grants program.[55] Supplemented by the much smaller pool of funding and services available to museums from the federal government following from the 1972 National Museum Policy, these two initiatives financed a period of intense museum proliferation that continued until the early 1990s. A number of projects of significant cost were undertaken in this period as well, and the 1980s and early 1990s were characterized as a period of capital development that saw the biggest boom in museum making in Alberta history.[56] After 1993, severe spending cuts by Ralph Klein's newly elected administration in an effort to balance Alberta's books reduced the amount of government money available to museums at the same time as operating costs increased and professionalization and museum improvements drove up expenses. Financial stringencies, plus the fact that many communities by this point already had museums (there were more than 250 in Alberta in 2003) meant that only about forty new museums opened between 1993 and 2003, compared to the approximately 115 that opened in the previous ten years.[57]

Prior to 1967, Alberta's mainstream museum community had been guided by a western elite dominated by the interests of Canada's Anglo/French charter groups, and particularly by individuals from British and Ontario backgrounds. The broadening of the museum community in this last phase of museum development saw museums established by

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[55]Davies, 130. The Alberta Museums Association had been established as a not-for-profit volunteer organization in 1971. The funding provided in 1984 led to the development of a grant program and of a professional secretariat to deliver funding, advisory and training services to museums. The federal government also administers a program called the Museum Assistance Program.

[56]Rasmussen, 258.

[57]Museum listings compiled by author. See Appendix for the complete list and references.

ordinary individuals from a variety of backgrounds, often in rural farm-based communities. The Centennial led not just to a broadening of the mainstream museum movement but also to increased ethnic participation in heritage activities. The notion of multiculturalism as the essence of Canadian identity, proclaimed official government policy by Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau in 1971, reinforced this trend.[58] Multiculturalism emerged from the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, established by the administration of Lester B. Pearson in 1963, and growing recognition of the need to acknowledge the cultural diversity of Canada's population.[59] In professionally staffed museums across the country both multiculturalism and the popularization of the social history of the 1960s and the post-modern theories of the 1970s and 1980s translated into an eventual increase in ethnic representations. In community museums multiculturalism served to buoy historical consciousness among ethnic groups through its legitimization of the ethnic experience. As a result, the number of groups presenting their own ethnic history, either as part of the representation of the community's history or in exclusively ethnic exhibitions and facilities, increased dramatically.[60] In Alberta, the influence of multiculturalism also meant that ethnic activities previously outside the mainstream movement, such as the Ukrainian museum movement and Mormon preservation and commemoration activities, found a place as part of the mainstream.

Multiculturalism had a profound effect on museums in Alberta, especially in the

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[58]H. Karim, "Constructions, Deconstructions, and Reconstructions: Competing Canadian Discourses on Ethnocultural Terminology," *Canadian Journal of Communication* 18:2 (Spring 1993): n.p., Canadian Business and Current Affairs Index 2990786.

[59]Marie F. Zielinska, "Multiculturalism in Canada: A Review of the First Decade," *Ethnic Forum* 2:2 (1982): 84; A. Davidson Dunton, et al., *Royal Commission on Biculturalism and Bilingualism*, vol. 1 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967), xxv-xxvi; and Dunton, vol. 4 (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1969), 14, 217-223, 228-230.

[60]Dunton, vol. 4, 217-218.

1980s and 1990s. Not only were more museums opening with a specifically ethnic focus, but, more importantly, ideas of ethnic diversity entered into mainstream museums as it became common for community museums to interpret the ethnic make-up of their communities in some way. Also, larger professionally staffed museums, such as the PMA and the Glenbow, regularly hosted temporary exhibits that focussed on the province's ethnic character; today, one of the Glenbow's permanent galleries features a multicultural exhibit, *Heritage from the Homeland.* At present, approximately sixty museums identify themselves as interpreting a particular ethnic heritage, representing the cultures of the Aboriginal, Black, British, Chinese, Danish, Doukhobor, French, German, Icelandic, Japanese, Jewish, Mennonite, Métis, Mormon, Norwegian, and Ukrainian communities.[61] Without identifying themselves as ethnic, many more museums represent the cultural heritage of one or more groups in their area as part of the local story. The appearance of ethnicity in Alberta's community museums has been determined partly by the trends characterizing the four phases of mainstream museum development and partly by particular circumstances within the ethnic community. These phenomena are well illustrated in the Ukrainian, Mormon, British, French, Chinese and Danish community museums chosen for this study.

ETHNICITY IN ALBERTA'S COMMUNITY MUSEUMS

By the 1970s the Ukrainian museum movement in Alberta already had a long and unique history. Besides being the only non Anglo/French group to open museums before the Second World War, their museums were also unique in that they initially focussed on cultural traditions from the homeland rather than the pioneer. The Ukrainian museum

[61]Museum listings compiled by author. See Appendix for the complete list and references.

movement began in the 1920s when the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada (UWAC) began organizing exhibits in major cities, including Edmonton, to "populariz[e] national culture" through the "expansion of knowledge regarding styles and authenticity of Ukrainian arts to the Canadian community."[62] In the beginning, the UWAC was chiefly interested in embroidery and teaching the skills to Ukrainian women through displays, instructional materials and classes. Increasingly, as it became apparent that the Ukrainian people were under attack by the Soviet regime in their homeland, the feeling developed in Canada that the preservation of Ukrainian culture and traditions was in the hands of Ukrainians living overseas.[63] This belief was accompanied by a growing sense of urgency among the surviving Ukrainian immigrants and their descendants that, if some action was not taken, assimilation would cause traditional skills to be lost by younger generations. The UWAC formally began to acquire crafts, textiles, *pysanky* (Easter eggs), dolls, maps and other articles "collected in the rural communities of Western Canada," in 1936, opening its Ukrainian Museum of Canada at the P. Mohyla Institute in Saskatoon, followed by branch museums in Toronto and Edmonton (1944), Winnipeg (1950), Vancouver (1957) and Calgary (1976).[64] These initiatives were primarily driven by cultural self-preservation rather than nostalgia for any particularly Canadian custom or experience but around the time of the Second World War a western Canadian pioneer element crept into the Ukrainian representation on the prairies. In Alberta specifically, the pioneer has come to drive the

[62]Mary Tkachuk, "The Ukrainian Museum of Canada of the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada: Historical Highlights 1927 - 1977," in *A Half Century of Service to the Community: An Outline of the Ukrainian Women's Association of Canada, 1926-1976*, ed. Natalia L. Kohuska (Edmonton-Winnipeg: UWAC, 1986), 974.

[63]Natalia V. Shostak, "Local Ukrainianness in Transnational Context: An Ethnographic Study of a Prairie Community." (Ph.D dissertation, University of Alberta, 2001), 2.

[64]Tkachuk, 977.

representation in Ukrainian community museums, although an historical tradition of resisting cultural assimilation, both in Canada and Ukraine, remains a strong theme.

The first wave of Ukrainian immigration to Canada began in 1891 with the arrival of Wasyl Eleniak and Ivan Pylypiw, both of whom took homesteads in the Edna-Star area north-east of Edmonton near present-day Lamont. Land in their native Galicia and Bukovyna had become overcrowded, prompting thousands of Ukrainian peasants to abandon their small plots for the promise of 160 acres on the Canadian prairies. The vast majority of Ukrainian immigrants settled on homesteads; according to the 1901 census, 97% of Ukrainians in Alberta lived in rural areas, the rest dispersed in mining communities (especially the Crowsnest Pass and Lethbridge area) and in cities like Edmonton.[65] The largest bloc of Ukrainian settlement in Canada emerged east from Edmonton, extending along and north of the present-day Yellowhead highway through the parkland belt. Ukrainian immigrants found this area appealing because it offered an abundance of wood, water, black soil and German neighbours who were also from the Austria-Hungarian Empire and could potentially offer employment.[66]

From the start, mainstream Alberta saw Ukrainian peasants as controversial, with figures like Frank Oliver loudly protesting immigration from eastern Europe. For the federal government, concerns about the assimilability of Ukrainians were balanced against the value of bringing hardy and experienced farmers to quickly settle the West and create markets for eastern manufacturers.[67] The local elite, however, envisioned Alberta as a mirror image of

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[65]Lubomyr Luciuk, *Searching for Place: Ukrainian Displaced Persons, Canada, and the Migration of Memory* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001): 15.

[66]Vladimir J. Kaye, *Early Ukrainian Settlements in Canada, 1895 - 1900: Dr. Oleskow's Role in the Settlement of the Northwest* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), 71-73.

[67]Ibid., 20.

eastern Canadian society and, Ukrainian immigrants disturbed that reflection with their style of dress, religious practices, peasant way of life, language and cultural traditions. As a result, the assimilation of younger generations of Ukrainians became a priority, with the public school system as the primary vehicle.[68] When the First World War began, however, Ukrainians became not only undesirable culturally but also suspect politically as former subjects of the enemy, Austria-Hungary, and thousands were interned during this period.

Following the war, under the impetus of a second wave of Ukrainian immigration and increased economic security and thus time to pursue cultural activities on the part of the first wave, a Ukrainian preservation movement emerged in Alberta. It focussed on preserving artifacts and showcasing traditions that demonstrated a Ukrainian past, but differed from the mainstream movement and later Ukrainian museums in that it was decidedly geared toward maintaining and projecting cultural traditions into the future rather than glorifying an idyllic past. In addition to the UWAC's work, collections were also being built in Mundare by the Ukrainian Catholic Order of Saint Basil the Great, thanks, in large part to the individual efforts and interests of Father Josaphat Jean. A French Canadian priest who had transferred from the Roman rite, Father Jean became a champion of Ukrainian cultural preservation while training in the Ukrainian language and Byzantine rite in Galicia, under the founder of the National Museum in Lviv, Metropolitan Andriy Sheptytsky. Father Jean's collection, acquired with the intention of someday establishing a Ukrainian museum in Canada also reflected his desire to save cultural treasures in Galicia from the threat of another war.[69]

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[68]Howard Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice: A History of Nativism in Alberta* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1982), 46.

[69]"Once upon a time . . ." and "How it all started . . .," text panels, *Collector's Extravaganza - Odds and Ends Exhibit,* Basilian Fathers Museum, Mundare, AB, visited 17 September 2002.

When the Second World War began, the memory of internment and wartime discrimination was still fresh and Ukrainians, who had now been in Canada for two generations and nearly fifty years, were determined to make their loyalty known. Events in the homeland also had an impact, with the Ukrainian Museum of Canada, for example, motivated by the "loss of contact with western Ukraine . . . to publish new embroidery designs to facilitate handicraft work in the local branches and communities."[70] Thus, its handicraft and museum committees launched a war effort project to teach embroidery to Ukrainian women, selling the articles and donating the profits to the Red Cross, and publicizing the project to show "Canadian citizens the valuable contribution of Ukrainian women to the cultural life of Canada."[71] While the war halted mainstream heritage activities, it significantly gave new purpose to the Ukrainian movement and helped to precipitate a gradual shift toward interpreting the Ukrainian experience on the prairie, through the pioneer, in an effort to demonstrate the Ukrainian contribution to the building of the region. In Alberta, this momentum led to the opening of the Elk Island museum in 1951, the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada (UCWLC) museum in Edmonton in 1952, and the Basilian Fathers Museum in Mundare in1953.

The Basilian Fathers had come to Mundare in 1902 to lead the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church and to stem defection of the faithful to neighbouring Anglo Protestant and Russian Orthodox churches, both proselytizing in the area. Accompanying the first Basilians were four Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate (SSMI), and together, from their base in Beaver Lake and subsequently Mundare, they exerted a profound influence on not only Ukrainian

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[70]Tkachuk, 976.

[71]Ibid., 984.

community life in the bloc but also the landscape. Over the years, in addition to the church, in the small town of Mundare the Basilians and Sister Servants built and operated a monastery, convent, cemetery, orphanage, printing press, hospital, grotto, national hall, and museum and archives.[72] The Basilian Fathers Museum was Alberta's fourth Ukrainian museum and its original exhibits were also dominated by arts and crafts, in part because the Mundare branch of the UCWLC was involved in its administration.[73] The museum also served to interpret both the Basilians and the town of Mundare and through this story the pioneer was introduced.

Interestingly, no new Ukrainian museums opened in Alberta in the 1960s when the mainstream movement began to open up, but in the 1970s many Ukrainian museums, as well as museums in Ukrainian communities, emerged as part of the mainstream movement with the pioneer as their focus. One of these, the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village near Elk Island National Park, was founded by a Ukrainian community group in 1971; bought by the province in 1975, it has grown into one of the largest and most significant heritage sites in the province's network.[74] Today Ukrainians are by far the most represented ethnic group in the museum community with seven exclusively Ukrainian museums in operation.[75]

The other preservation movement to develop outside the mainstream was the Mormon movement which shared many similarities with its Ukrainian counterpart. Both

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[72]Mundare Historical Society, *Memories of Mundare: A History of Mundare and Districts* (Mundare: Mundare Historical Society, 1980), 31-47. See also Basilian Fathers, *In Tribute to the Basilian Pioneers, 1902-1977* (Edmonton: N.p., 1977).

[73]Mundare Historical Society, 42.

[74]Rasmussen, 253.

[75]They are the Basilian Fathers Museum (Mundare), the Ukrainian Catholic Women's League Museum (Edmonton), the Ukrainian Museum of Canada - Edmonton Branch (Edmonton), the Ukrainian Museum of Canada - Calgary Branch (Calgary), the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village (east of Elk Island National Park), the Ukrainian Canadian Archives and Museum of Alberta (Edmonton), and the Historical Village and Pioneer Museum at Shandro (Shandro).

groups entered into heritage activities early, and for reasons different from those of the mainstream. Both were inextricably bound with religious institutions and very often their activities were directly church sponsored, physically contained within a church building, or devoted to illustrating the role of religious institutions in the community. Both communities tended to be internally focussed with a significant emphasis on self-preservation, although motivated by different ideas. Ukrainian self-preservation was driven by nationalism and manifested in the maintenance of handicraft and folk art skills, traditions and language while Mormon self-preservation was driven by religion and motivated by the maintenance of a church community. The Mormons did not produce as many museums, although in addition to the two under study in Cardston, in the Mormon dominated region of south-western Alberta there are museums in both Raymond and Magrath, while the village of Stirling has been designated a National Historic Site because of its unique town layout following Joseph Smith's *Plat of Zion* plan.[76] The Mormons have been marking and commemorating places and people significant to their history since a very early time, however, and the pioneer has always been the main character. Already in 1936, sociologist C.A. Dawson noticed that "one of the very interesting trends in recent years is the building of monuments, for example that dedicated in 1930 to the Canadian Mormon pioneers, on the temple block of Cardston."[77] Dawson believed that the Mormons built monuments to establish a sense of permanency and belonging in Canada, perpetuating the idea that the Canadian settlements were part of the Mormon idea of a North American Zion. It combatted a common propensity on the part of

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[76]"The Plat of Zion: A Blue Print for Settlement," interpretive panel, interpretive kiosk, Stirling National Historic Site, Stirling, AB, visited March 2002.

[77]C.A. Dawson, *Group Settlement: Ethnic Communities in Western Canada*, vol. 7 of *Canadian Frontiers of Settlement*, ed. W.A. Mackintosh and W.L.G. Joerg (Toronto: Macmillan, 1936), 226, 224.

Mormon settlers to look to Utah for religious and cultural identification and feelings that the Alberta settlements were auxiliary to those in the Great Salt Lake Basin.[78]

It is in part this tendency to look to Utah as a homeland that makes the Mormon settlers of southern Alberta function as an ethnic group in important respects. Despite the fact that the Mormons share a short cultural heritage compared to the other groups in this study, many of the markers generally used to identify an ethnic group are present within the Mormon community, for instance, self and outsider identification as a group, kinship ties and a shared historical mythology. Of course, the primary ethnic identifier is their religious heritage and the belief that they are a 'peculiar people' as descendants of the tribes of Israel. Their American origin is part of this belief and provides their homeland influence. The Mormon people in both the Great Salt Lake Basin and southern Alberta's 'Mormon country' share economic, political and cultural peculiarities in addition to religion.[79]

The Mormons came to southern Alberta in 1887 as fugitives from the Edmunds anti-polygamy laws of the United States. Eight families under the leadership of Charles Ora Card came to the Cardston district and settled on Lee Creek on the south edge of the Blood Reserve. Card chose Canada - and not Mexico, where some Mormons went - on the advice of stake President John Taylor, himself from Ontario, who had great faith in the "British Justice" he was sure Card would find.[80] The arrival of Mormon families in southern Alberta prompted some harsh criticism - primarily because of their reputation for polygamy and the

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[78]Ibid., 226.

[79]See Keith Perry, "Mormons as Ethnics: A Canadian Perspective," in *The Mormon Presence in Canada*, ed. Brigham Y. Card, et al. (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1990), 353 - 365.

[80]Jessie L. Embry, "'Two Legal Wives': Mormon Polygamy in Canada, the United States and Mexico," in ibid., 178.

differences in their religious beliefs - from surrounding communities, in particular in some local newspapers, but they were also almost immediately befriended by Elliot Galt and his agent C.A. Magrath, who saw the business potential of partnering with Cardston's Mormons. In fact, the Galt Alberta Irrigation Company worked with the Church of the Latter-day Saints (LDS) to bring large numbers of Mormon settlers from overcrowded Utah to colonize southern Alberta and build its canals. This arrangement led to a second wave of Mormon immigration and to the Mormon dominance in the area.[81]

Like the Basilians in Mundare but more so, the Mormon church was pervasive in the town of Cardston. The Cardston temple, with its dramatic white granite architecture and location on a high point in town, has dominated the area's landscape since its completion in 1923. Also, Mormon communities were organized physically, socially and economically to ensure each member's inclusion in an extensive religious network. Settlers lived on large lots, with gardens and their animals, in town, and farmed the surrounding countryside. The cooperative store, sawmill, dairy and cheese factory, flour mill, and most social activities were organized through the church.[82] The paramountcy of the church was reinforced through a patriarchical leadership structure and a heavy reliance on Card and other church officials. Culture and education were highly valued, with Zina Young Card especially known for her support of activities that lent to the building of 'society' in the community.[83] History, as well, soon came to be an important tool for community building, and community firsts,

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[81]Brigham Y. Card, "Charles Ora Card and the Founding of Mormon Settlements in Southwestern Alberta, North-West Territories," in ibid., 93-97.

[82]Anthony W. Rasporich, "Early Mormon Settlement in Western Canada: A Comparative Communitarian Perspective," in ibid., 142.

[83]Maureen Ursenbach Beecher, "Mormon Women in Southern Alberta: The Pioneer Years," in ibid., 222-223.

persons important to community development and anniversaries were faithfully noted and celebrated. The Golden and Diamond Jubilees in Cardston each produced a history book, and, by 1970 at least four monuments had been built: the previously mentioned monument to the pioneers, a cairn marking the point were Mormon pioneers crossed the American/Canadian border, a provincial cairn marking the Card Home, and another cairn at Lee Creek.[84] In 1962, in recognition of the seventy-fifth anniversary of settlement, the Cardston and District Historical Society undertook to preserve the Card Home and open it as a pioneer museum.[85] In 1982 the group acquired the recently vacated court house for a museum. The Card Home was organized to represent the era when the Card family lived there.

The Mormons were accepted into mainstream society fairly quickly, especially because of their unique relationship with the Galts and the resulting favour of the Canadian government; their farming and irrigation skills; their use of the English language; and, eventually, their support of the prohibition movement.[86] After all, as Emily Murphy pointed out in 1911, despite their peculiar beliefs, "they are Anglo-Saxons, . . . who in the end will swing into true balance because of the fine sanity and finer sense of justice that go to make up the bed-rock principles of the race."[87] Despite this acceptance, because of the heavy church focus and polygamy legacy, Mormon historical expressions were not initially thought of as part of the greater Alberta experience, but, like the Ukrainian museum movement, developed

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[84]Hugh Dempsey, *Historic Sites Alberta* (Edmonton: Alberta Government Travel Bureau, 1970), 53.

[85]Hugh Dempsey, "Notes and Comments," *Alberta Historical Review* 10:1 (Winter 1962): 29.

[86]Howard Palmer, "Polygamy and Progress: The Reaction to Mormons in Canada, 1887-1923," in ibid., 109-110, 126-127.

[87]Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 26. For a settlement era example of mainstream fears regarding Mormon settlement see James S. Woodsworth, *Strangers Within our Gates*, 1909, reprint, with introduction by Marilyn Barber (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 65-71. In particular the graphic Woodsworth includes in the section dealing with LDS settlement shows a menacing looking black "octopus of Mormonism" stretching its tentacles across a map of North America and reaching into southern Alberta (67).

outside the mainstream until multiculturalism influenced its narrative in the 1970s. The other four museums in this study did develop in the mainstream, although the fact that they did so sometimes attests more to attitudes at the time of their establishment than to attitudes at the time of their settlement. The exclusion experienced by the Chinese is among the most abhorrent episodes in Alberta's history. In contrast, the Danish assimilated quickly into the Alberta mainstream, especially if they had previously settled in the United States and thus been exposed to an English-speaking North American environ. Finally, the British in High River and the French in Bonnyville, were communities always part of the mainstream.

The Museum of the Highwood in High River opened in what had been Eamor's Saddlery store on 3 Avenue West in 1961, following from the wishes of a group of interested citizens, forming the Powwow Committee, who wanted a small seasonal museum for the area.[88] From the start it was associated with the High River and District Pioneers' and Old Timers Association (established 1932), which maintained a presence at the museum; donating from the profits of its 1961 community history book, *Leaves from the Medicine Tree*, and occupying two seats on the board of directors.[89] Since the 1960s, the Museum of the Highwood has undergone a gradual professionalization. In 1971 the town purchased the old sandstone railway station from the CPR and the next year the museum opened its doors from this new location. It now employs a director/curator, seasonal staff and an active body of volunteers, and runs an impressive program of temporary exhibits that relate the history of the Highwood River basin region from a number of perspectives.

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[88]Dianne Vallée, interview by author, High River, AB, 31 August 2002.

[89]Lillian Knupp, *Life and Legends: A History of the Town of High River* (Calgary: Sandstone Publishing, 1982), 204-205; and Vallée, interview.

Discussing the Museum of the Highwood as an ethnic museum might seem an odd choice. The museum certainly does not claim to be a British/Anglo-Canadian museum, but it is the absence of any such assertion, plus an almost exclusive emphasis on the influence of British lifestyles and traditions in the museum and around town, that makes its mainstream ethnicity most apparent.[90] While High River is not comprised entirely of Anglo-Canadians, they certainly form a substantial majority, so that the concentration on the Anglo-Canadian experience is not unfounded. Settlement of the High River area began in the 1880s with ranchers, and later farmers, from Ontario or Britain.[91] Often better off than many other immigrant groups, English speaking, of Anglo-Saxon heritage and familiar with Canadian social and political traditions, they quickly established themselves and their position in Alberta society. Relative proximity to Calgary also allowed the settlers to engage with a larger Alberta elite. High River's participation in the major themes of the Alberta mainstream historical narrative is illustrated through the murals that grace the exterior walls of many buildings around town. For instance, the Old Woman Buffalo Jump and teepee encampment murals depict the First Nations. The Fort Spitzee mural portrays the NWMP, the illegal liquor trade and Treaty 7 signed by Chief Crowfoot. Ranching and farming are illustrated in round-up and harvest scenes, social life through paintings of Sunday afternoon in the park, chuckwagon races and polo games. The murals also reflect a more recent mainstream membership through portraits of high profile High River residents, former Prime Minister Joe Clark and author W.O. Mitchell.

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[90]One of High River's historical murals depicts Marie Meyer Davis, High River's first nurse, born in Germany. Other murals, monuments, and interpretative texts within the museum depict First Nations people from the Blackfoot Nation that resides in the area.

[91]Knupp, 11.

The other European founder group in Alberta, the French, were also full participants in the mainstream narrative, their roots in the Métis communities around St. Albert and Lac St. Anne. Building from these and similar foundations across the West, the Oblates sought to attract French settlers to the region as an alternative to emigration from Quebec to New England, to entice emigrants back to Canada, and to create and maintain a French presence in the West to counteract the flood of English-speaking Canadians. In Alberta, French settlements were concentrated in four areas: St. Albert, St. Paul - Bonnyville, Lac La Biche, and Peace River. Each area became dotted with communities bearing the names of colonizing priests such as Lacombe, Morinville, Legal, Bonnyville, and Falher, who recruited settlers from New England and Quebec as well as small numbers from French-speaking countries like France, Belgium or Switzerland.[92]

These French communities were small, however, and often other ethnic groups settled among them. The Bonnyville area is one example and its multiethnic make-up is apparent in the Bonnyville and District Museum. Opened in 1991, the museum is a collection of original and replica buildings from the Bonnyville area that tell the story of the community, beginning with the fur trade and highlighting the role of Roman Catholic missionaries and French families, yet simultaneously making a concerted effort to acknowledge the area's multicultural character. The historical society's crest features the French, English, and Ukrainian languages, while in the museum the signs, literature and interpreted tours are in French and English. Bilingual interpretation has also facilitated access to a number of

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[92]Donald B. Smith, "A History of French-Speaking Albertans," in *Peoples of Alberta: Portraits of Cultural Diversity*, ed. Howard Palmer and Tamara Palmer (Saskatoon: Western Producer Prairie Books, 1985), 91.

federally administered programs and funds.[93] The wider impact of such programs and funding can be seen in the development pattern of French museums in Alberta. While the French formed part of the early provincial mainstream heritage movement, once the first pioneers passed on, they began to fall away as participants, even though their place in the narrative remained. As a result, very few French museums opened until the advent of official bilingualism and multiculturalism paved the way for new French museums in the 1980s.[94]

Multiculturalism had two major implications for Alberta's community museums. As in Bonnyville, it led to small community museums interpreting the multiethnic nature of their towns and districts, providing space for many ethnic groups, including those previously excluded, to be represented. It also led to the establishment of museums serving particular ethnic communities and soliciting broad support from members of the ethnic group, a phenomenon that gained momentum in the 1990s. Both the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre with its museum and the Danish Canadian National Museum and Gardens fall into this category, and act as much as cultural centres as they do history museums. Whether these institutions, very recent in their development, the former officially opening in 1993 and the latter in 2002, are the beginning of a trend as they seem to be, remains to be seen. Both the Chinese and Danish museums have space devoted to their locality, Calgary's Chinatown and the Dickson farming district respectively, but they also have a broader mission to interpret Chinese and Danish culture.

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[93]Germaine Prybysh, interview by author, Bonnyville, AB, 28 August 2002.

[94]After the Father Lacombe Chapel in 1927, Historic Dunvegan in 1961, and the Girouxville Museum in 1969, no other French museums were opened until the 1980s. In 2003 eleven museums claimed to interpret the French in Alberta, at least in part, including three that are provincially administered. In addition to the three just mentioned, they are: Morinville Museum (Morinville), Centre Vital Grandin (St. Albert), Musée Historique de St. Paul (St. Paul), Lac La Biche Mission (Lac La Biche), Saint Ann Ranch Museum and Interpretive Centre (Trochu), Bonnyville and District Museum (Bonnyville), Musée Héritage (St. Albert), and Musée de Plamondon (Plamondon).

Chinese settlers first came to Alberta after the CPR was completed in 1885. Most originated in China's south-east coastal provinces of Guangdong and Fujian, pushed out by political unrest and extreme overpopulation. Most were also sojourners and overwhelmingly male, often supporting existing families in China, or returning temporarily to marry and father families.[95] Some undoubtedly would have eventually brought their families to Canada had conditions allowed.[96] Instead, the Chinese faced overt racism and exclusion at a level unparalleled by any other ethnic group in Canada. In 1885 the federal government imposed a head tax of fifty dollars on each immigrant; by 1908 it was five hundred dollars and each immigrant was required to have two hundred dollars on landing. If this amount effectively prohibited most Chinese men from bringing their families to Canada, the 1923 Chinese Immigration or Exclusion Act, which came into force on Dominion Day ("Humiliation Day" to the Chinese), made it impossible.[97]

The 3,600 Chinese in Alberta prior to the Exclusion Act lived mostly in urban enclaves, in Chinatowns in Medicine Hat, Lethbridge, Calgary and Edmonton.[98] White society made efforts to keep the Chinese separate, as it associated them with smallpox, prostitution, drug use and gambling, and entertained bizarre fears about contact with white women and children. The Chinese, in turn, found it easier to live in communities where they

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[95]Jin Tan and Patricia E. Roy, *The Chinese in Canada* (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1985), 4.

[96]Anthony B. Chan, "The Myth of the Chinese Sojourner in Canada," in *Visible Minorities and Multiculturalism: Asians in Canada*, ed. K. Victor Ujimoto and Gordon Hirabayashi (Toronto: Butterworth and Company, 1980), 34, 39-40.

[97]J. Brian Dawson, *Moon Cakes in Gold Mountain: From China to the Canadian Plains* (Calgary: Detselig Enterprises, 1991), 139.

[98]Ban Sen Hoe, "The Chinatown in Alberta: Adaptation, Urban Renewal and Community's Needs," in *Selected Papers from the Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada*, ed. Christina Cameron and Martin Segger (Ottawa: Society for the Study of Architecture in Canada, 1981), 22.

were surrounded by others who spoke their language and practised the same customs and lifestyle, and where they could access the help and comradery of the many societies and kin networks they brought with them from China.[99] The internal need for community support and external exclusion kept the Chinese from taking part in most mainstream activities, and heritage was no exception. When China became an ally to Canada in the Second World War, public opinion and policy began to change, but racism and habit meant that the Chinese would not become full participants in the heritage community until multiculturalism facilitated it. In the 1980s when Calgary developers began a push to redesignate the Chinatown area in downtown Calgary for high density office space, a move that would have inevitably seen the end of Chinatown as a culturally distinctive neighbourhood, the Chinese community mobilized to assert its place in Calgary. From the resulting negotiations between the Chinese community and the city emerged the plans for the cultural centre.[100] The Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Museum remains the only Chinese museum in Alberta, but both Edmonton and Calgary have undertaken projects to feature Chinese culture and tradition on the streets of their Chinatowns through decorative walks, lamp and sign posts, banners, and, in Edmonton with an impressive Chinatown gate.[101] In addition, in 1983 the Chinese community in Edmonton produced a video and a book, both entitled *Our Chosen Land*, to commemorate 125 years of Chinese settlement in Canada. They dealt with many of the same themes as the later *Our Chosen Land* gallery in the Chinese museum and both represented

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[99]Palmer, *Patterns of Prejudice*, 22; and Dawson, 74-77.

[100]Malcolm Chow, "The Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre - Where It's From and Where It's Going," *Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Special Inauguration Publication* (Calgary: Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre, 1992), 24.

[101]Dawson, 224-227.

an assertion by the Chinese community that they had a place in Alberta's history.

The Danish community in Alberta had a very different experience. The immigration of Danes to the province was welcomed by the established mainstream. Danes were Protestant, western European, and, having generally come to Canada from older settlements in the United States, already accustomed to the North American lifestyle.[102] They were also likely to have a basic education and tended to learn English quickly. Danish settlement in Alberta began in 1903 when a group of farmers, consecrated as the "Pella" Lutheran congregation, left Omaha, Nebraska, attracted by ten-dollar homesteads.[103] Others followed from elsewhere in Nebraska, Iowa and Michigan, founding the central Alberta Danish communities of Dickson, Dalum and Standard. The Danes settled together, but not in closed communities, and it was very common for the second generation to marry outside the ethnic group. In addition, the group strongly identified with its Lutheran church roots, perhaps at the expense of a cultural consciousness.[104] Because of these tendencies, the Danes assimilated quickly and, after a generation, were so integrated into the mainstream that the mainstream narrative could easily be adopted as their own. Under the impact of multiculturalism, however, the Danes began to establish their own ethnic mythology. In the case of the museum, this process was aided by an active national Danish community, in the form of the Danish Federation of Canada, and by strong ties to Denmark. The tiny village of Dickson itself, where the museum is located, has a vigorous Danish historical identity, and

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[102]Howard Palmer, "Patterns of Immigration and Ethnic Settlement in Alberta, 1880-1920," in *Peoples of Alberta,* 15.

[103]Margarethe Nissen, Esther Thesberg and Andy Kjearsgaard, "A History of Dickson, Alberta, Canada," in *Danish Emigration to Canada,* ed. Henning Bender and Birgit Flemming Larsen (Aalborg, Denmark: Danish Worldwide Archives, 1991), 72.

[104]Frank M. Paulsen, *Danish Settlements on the Canadian Prairies: Folk Traditions, Immigrant Experiences, and Local History* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1974), 2-3.

the Danish museum is the second museum there, the first being the Dickson Store Museum, opened in 1991 with a ceremony presided over by Margaret II, Queen of Denmark.[105] The latter decades of the twentieth century have, as with the Chinese, allowed members of the Danish community to rediscover, or, in some cases, uncover for the first time, an ethnic historical identity and to find their own place in the mainstream museum movement.

Alberta's mainstream museum community began as an elite, British/Anglo-Canadian dominated movement, in which the French played a strong role in the resulting mythology and as individuals were active in the movement. After the first generations of pioneers, however, French involvement decreased substantially until multiculturalism and bilingualism revitalized French participation. The pioneer was established as the driving mythology very early in the province's history and has remained firmly in that position ever since. The mainstream movement went though a democratization that began with the Centennial and gained strength throughout the 1970s and 1980s. At the same time, the ascendence of multiculturalism allowed any number of ethnic groups, including those that had developed their own heritage movements outside the mainstream, membership in the broader museum community. This shared membership is overwhelmingly expressed in Alberta's community museums through the character and narrative of the pioneer.

[105]Photograph and plaque, Dickson Store Museum, Dickson, AB, visited 26 May 2002.

CHAPTER 2

THE GENERIC PIONEER IN THE ETHNIC COMMUNITY MUSEUM

The generic pioneer is found in most of Alberta's community museums and is interpreted through a common narrative structure and rhetoric. In the ethnic community museum this figure serves a very particular purpose. The generic pioneer establishes for the ethnic community their place in a shared Alberta history and provides expression for the portion of their identity that is grounded on the prairie and tied to the time of settlement. While each institution's particular focus and experience produce small differences in presentation, most often the differences are in emphasis rather than in content. The six museums in this study fall into three categories - ethno-geographic, ethno-religious and ethno-cultural - reflecting the relationship between ethnicity and place and the interplay of each with other factors that act on group identity. Yet despite these different perspectives, a common narrative structure presents the pioneer in three lights: as conqueror of the land, as builder of civilization and as superior moral being. Each facet is derived from preexisting conceptualizations of the frontier and its relationship with humankind.

The expression of this relationship that appears in the community museum has its origins in Frederick Jackson Turner's address, *The Significance of the Frontier in American History,* to the American Historical Association in 1893. The Turner or frontier thesis, as his argument came to be known, was articulated in conjunction with the passing of the last American frontier in the previous decade. It suggested that the creation and continual renewal of the American polity were the result of the exchange between civilization and wilderness that happened on the edge of settlement as it pushed west and subsequently

reflected back upon eastern states and institutions. In this process, the availability of free land and the equalizing forces of nature were responsible for the individualism that characterized American democracy.[1] Turner's thesis long ago fell out of favour with most American historians as an oversimplification and its application to the Canadian experience has been heavily contested. For even when its basic tenets regarding the relationship between humankind and the land were accepted, Canada lacked the overall prerequisite conditions for a Turnerian frontier presumed to exist in the United States. Canada, for example, experienced no revolutionary rejection of old-world institutions and values, rhetorical or otherwise; 'law and order' in the form of the North-West Mounted Police preceded western settlement; and there was no continuous advance of the frontier line, as the tangled rock and evergreens of the Canadian shield prevented a "Middle West."[2]

Despite the rejection of a wholesale application of the frontier thesis among Canadian academics after the Second World War, Turner's description of the process that occurred as civilization met the wilderness continues to resonate in the popular imagination and in Alberta's community museums. Turner proposes a course where the settler arrives on the frontier and is confronted by wilderness, the forces of which, if left unchecked, would counter and consume order and civilization. Although at first dominated by the wildness of the West, and forced to learn and respect its ways, in the ensuing battle between "savagery

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[1]Frederick Jackson Turner, "The Significance of Frontier in American History," in *The West of the American People,* ed. Allen G. Bogue, et al. (Itasca, Illinios: F.E. Peacock Publishers, 1970), 5-6.

[2]George F.G. Stanley referred to Canada's lack of a "Middle West" in "Western Canada and the Frontier Thesis," in *Canadian Historical Association Annual Report,* ed. R.G. Riddel (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1940), 105-117. See also J.M.S. Careless, "Frontierism, Metropolitanism, and Canadian History," in *Approaches to Canadian History*, ed. Carl Berger (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 63-83; J.M.S. Careless, *Frontier and Metropolis: Regions, Cities, and Identities in Canada Before 1914* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press,1989), 35-50; and Paul Voisey,"Introduction," *Vulcan: The Making of a Prairie Community* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 3-9.

and civilization" the pioneer slowly begins to change the wilderness, civilizing, and, in fact, mastering it.[3] With the conquest of the land complete, the pioneer's attention turns to establishing a society. This struggle is adopted as the principal narrative in Alberta's community museums. A second thread is the presence in the pioneer of particular qualities that facilitated the conquest of the land and the establishing of a society. Ultimately, the struggle is shown to be won by those who possessed the innate morality, perseverance and individual strength necessary to overcome it. For Turner, the individual is the primary actor within whom the unfettered freedom of the wilderness brings forth an "American intellect" made up of

> coarseness and strength combined with acuteness and inquisitiveness; that practical, inventive turn of mind, quick to find expedients; that masterful grasp of material things, lacking in the artistic but powerful to effect great ends; that restless, nervous energy; that dominant individualism.[4]

The generic pioneer on the Canadian prairies also possesses these characteristics, although they are often voiced as part of a Protestant work ethic and encompassed within its celebration of family, thrift, versatility, self-sufficiency, loyalty, hard work, chastity, sobriety and piety.[5] In Canadian local history museums, the pioneer

> seems to live in an egalitarian, conflict-free milieu and demonstrates the moral virtues of temperance, loyalty, hard work and good will. The "pioneering spirit" includes neighbourliness, frugality, hospitality, courage, simplicity, and a sense of accomplishment, of freedom, and of self-reliance.[6]

These characteristics enabled the conquest and civilization of the West and worked with

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[3]Turner, 5-6.

[4]Ibid., 10.

[5]Jean Friesen, "Introduction: Heritage Futures," *Prairie Forum* 15:2 (Fall 1990): 194; and Joanne A. Stiles, "Descended from Heros: The Frontier Myth in Rural Alberta," *Alberta* 2:2 (1990): 31-36.

[6]Chris Miller-Marti, "Local History Museums and the Creation of 'The Past'," *Muse* 5:2 (Summer 1987): 37.

them to form the generic pioneer narrative.

In Alberta's community museums the generic narrative provides the skeleton for the museum's interpretation. There are some ways, however, in which the presentation varies slightly from Turner's account of progress and conquering that leaves little room for setback or failure. Indeed, this story corresponds to the tone of the generic pioneer narrative as most community museums serve as temples to celebrate this telling of the past and are generally free from critique and debate.[7] Nonetheless, in the community museum, hardship and failure are sometimes represented, albeit for a particular purpose. The struggles faced by the pioneers appear difficult, long, and on occasion even tragic, but the pioneer generally heroically triumphs. That there were those who might not have triumphed adds to the credibility and glory of those who did. Therefore, failure is sometimes mentioned in the form of those who left the area or whose business or family life experienced problems. Often, however, those who failed are present by implication only or are characterized as an 'other,' where their failure resulted from a weakness of stock not easily accepted as part of the collective imagining. The struggle that does appear in the museum, then, is not an affront to the progress and success depicted in Turner's account of frontier settlement, but instead acts to accentuate the severity of the situation and the heroism of the pioneer's eventual triumph.

There is also some difference between Turner's pioneer and the generic pioneer in Alberta's community museums in the way gender is represented. The generic pioneer

[7]Post-modern museology often refers to an established binary, credited to Duncan Cameron, that presents the museum as a forum for debate versus the museum as a temple for celebration. See Steven D. Lavine and Ivan Karp, "Introduction: Museums and Multiculturalism," in *Exhibiting Cultures: The Poetics and Politics of Museum Display*, ed. Ivan Karp and Steven D. Lavine (Washington: Smithsonian Institute Press, 1991), 3.

narrative in the museum shares with Turner a preoccupation with the conquest of the land. One consequence, is a tendency to represent a predominantly male experience; because breaking the land was largely considered 'man's work' and evokes a masculine imagery, the generic pioneer can have a distinctly male flavour. The female is present in the museum, however, and in many cases she has a comparable amount of soil and blood beneath her fingernails. The female pioneer is sometimes used to depict suffering and sacrifice and her innate womanly morality and resourcefulness contribute to the triumph in the generic narrative. More important, however, is the centrality of the family to the generic pioneer story which precipitates a strong representation of women, as the keepers of the family, in the museum.[8] Finally, there is also a functional explanation for the significant female pioneer presence in Alberta's community museums, reflecting the decisions of the individuals who govern and administer them. Given the significant number of women involved in this capacity, and in particular with exhibit design and assembly, it is not surprising that displays constructed primarily since the 1980s have a considerable feminine element.

Notwithstanding these slight variations from Turner, the pattern of arriving in a wilderness and being confronted by the necessity for survival, followed by the slow conquest of the land and laying the foundations for civilization through a superior moral character, is consistently present in Alberta's community museums. It exists in some form in each of the six museums examined in this study, regardless of whether they are ethno-geographic, ethno-religious or ethno-cultural. These foci, which reflect the relative weight given place and ethnicity in the message each institution is attempting to privilege, determine how much, and

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[8]Stiles, 38-42.

in which ways, the pioneer is present. In each case the pioneer dominates the museum's interpretation of the Alberta locality, so that the greater the importance of the locality to the museum's main message, the greater the role of the pioneer. Likewise, as the importance of the locality in the museum's interpretation decreases so does the role of the pioneer.

In the ethno-geographic museum, the prairie place drives the interpretation and thus privileges the pioneer. In each of the Museum of the Highwood and the Bonnyville and District Museum, the primary focus is the geographic area: the town of High River and the Highwood River basin in the first instance, and the town and municipal district of Bonnyville in the second. In both communities, there is a high demographic concentration of a particular ethnic group, British and Anglo-Canadians in High River and French in Bonnyville, that is reflected in the museum's interpretation, but ethnicity is an incidental part of a story told mainly for the role it plays in each area's history. In the ethno-religious museum, the pioneer remains the driving narrative, again, in part, because the interpretation remains strongly grounded in the locality, but becomes an ethnically exclusive figure. Ethnicity itself has a powerful religious component. Like the communities they are situated in and depict the Basilian Fathers Museum and the Card Home and Court House Museum are dominated, respectively, by the Ukrainian Catholic Church, represented by the Order of St. Basil the Great and the Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate, and the Church of the Latter-day Saints (LDS), or the Mormons. Just as any discussion of ethnicity divorced from religion would be inadequate, the pioneer and ethnicity are so completely interrelated that neither is significantly more important than the other. Finally, in the ethno-cultural museum, locality is superceded by an international ethnic identity. The Danish Canadian National Museum

and Gardens and the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Museum focus, respectively, on Danish and Chinese culture and thus devote a large portion of the interpretation to the homeland heritage. The Canadian experience is still part of the interpretation, however, and each museum also addresses the locality it is situated in; it is in this representation that the pioneer takes the lead.

DISPLAYING THE PIONEER

The differences in the messages that each type of museum is attempting to send are reflected in part by their content, in part by the way of presentation. In a museum, themes can be made dominant or subordinate simply by the physical position they occupy. The physical layout of the museum and grounds; the appearance of the building; and the prominence, arrangement or aesthetics of the text, artifacts and other design elements used in the exhibit can easily privilege or hide a message.[9] Messages can also be communicated through a museum's publications, promotions and programming, and shaped by its governing structure, management, mission and policies. The extent to which the pioneer appears in the case studies depends in large measure on whether the museum is ethno-geographic, ethno-religious or ethno-cultural, but how the pioneer is displayed depends more on the type of museum and the focus of its administration. For instance, the Museum of the Highwood is program-based with a small amount of exhibit space and strong interactive elements; the Bonnyville and District Museum is a historic park; the Basilian Fathers Museum is a traditional museum in its organization and employs contemporary museological practice; the Court House Museum is a 'community attic' and the Card Home a historic house museum;

[9]Tony Bennett, *The Birth of the Museum: History, Theory, Politics* (London: Routledge, 1995), 130-132.

the Danish museum is an historic building plus gardens; and the Chinese museum is part of a multi-use cultural centre. The differences among these institutions result in differences in exhibits and emphasis that affect the appearance of the pioneer. For this reason, it is helpful to describe where and how the pioneer appears in each museum before detailing the substance of the generic pioneer narrative.

In the Museum of the Highwood, housed in a decommissioned sandstone Canadian Pacific Railway station, the land and the pioneer are the first things the visitor is encouraged to see. Entrance is through the gift shop, into what was the freight/baggage room where a permanent exhibit on the Highwood River basin region is located. This display consists of a three-dimensional topographic map of the region and seven miniature dioramas: "The Medicine Tree," depicting a Blackfoot camp near the area's celebrated highwood tree; "Ranching" and "Farming," which establish the pioneer as the main character; "High River," "Cayley" and "Blackie," representing local service centres; and the "Oilfields."[10] The dioramas depict outdoor landscapes and townscapes, peopled with male ranchers and farmers or townspeople of both sexes, all busily at work.[11] They are the only permanent part of the museum's displays, but as such, ensure the continuous presence of the pioneer in the museum if the pioneer is not a prominent actor in the rotating exhibits.

The bulk of the museum's exhibit space is assigned to temporary exhibits, in keeping with its mandate to change one-third of the displays every year.[12] In the summer of 2002,

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[10]Text panels and dioramas, Museum of the Highwood, High River, AB, visited 31 August 2002.

[11]Ibid. The Blackfoot figures in "The Medicine Tree" diorama are either participating in a ceremony or placed throughout the teepee encampment; one woman is scrapping a hide, another tends a fire.

[12]"The Museum of the Highwood, An Important Community Resource," Museum of the Highwood, High River, AB, November 2002.

Museum of the Highwood Permanent Exhibits, High River, AB, 2002

there were two major temporary exhibits and three minor ones. The latter - *Hollywood North?*, about movie making in High River and area; *Hair's to You* about the evolution of the last one hundred years of hairstyling; and a modest arrangement in honour of Queen Elizabeth II's Golden Jubilee - did not address the pioneer at all. The major exhibits, while not directly about the pioneer, still contained aspects of the generic pioneer narrative. *Motoring: The Allure of the Open Road*, examining the first forty years of the automobile in High River, and *Mail Order Shopping*, devoted to the role of Eaton's catalogue in the West, focussed on important aspects of pioneer life, using them, in fact, to illuminate elements of the pioneer experience found in more straightforward pioneer narratives. The *Mail Order Shopping* exhibit, in particular, imaginatively displayed many of the items found in every other pioneer museum but they were contextualized to tell a specific story, that of Eaton's catalogue and mail order retail. A pioneer kitchen and a sitting room had been assembled using items available from the catalogue. On each item was a tag made from a copy of the

item's advertisement and price as it appeared in the original catalogue. The kitchen and a number of authentic and replica toys were designated for 'hands on' play and were quite popular with the neighbourhood children.[13]

The Museum of the Highwood puts a higher priority on public and educational programming than is typical for a small community museum and the pioneer is perhaps more present in this outreach than in the exhibits themselves.[14] The museum's programming concentrates on teaching young people about life as a pioneer. School visits, for example, most often centre around the pioneer era, as in a recent oral history project where students in grades ten to twelve partnered with a senior to interview other seniors about pioneer life. The museum's partnership with the Sheppard Family Park Society facilitates access to the Sheppard Family Park - Heritage Picnic Site, also in High River, where a pioneer homestead and one-room school house provide an opportunity for first-person interpretation and participatory learning.[15] The curator/director of the Museum of the Highwood has made a notable attempt to avoid becoming a typical pioneer museum. The exhibits and programs are thematic and collection-driven and often tied to contemporary community events and issues. Yet although the exhibits and programming are creative, the generic pioneer story, as will be seen in greater detail later, remains strong, suggesting that it is so deeply ingrained that it serves as a backdrop even to a twenty-first-century telling of the story.

At the Bonnyville and District Museum, the presentation is more traditional and, as

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[13]Dianne Vallée, interview by author, High River, AB, 31 August 2002.

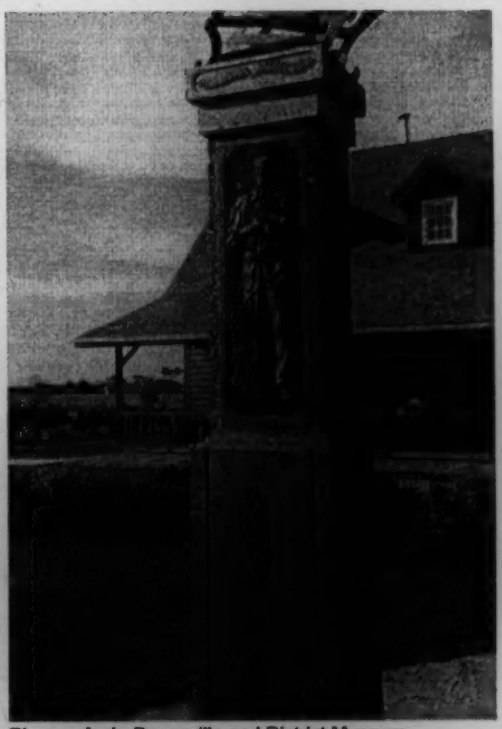
[14]Many of the observations made in this study regarding what is typical in Alberta's community museums are drawn from five years working in Alberta's museum sector, including for Museums Alberta, the provincial association. It has brought me into contact with many Alberta museums, over sixty of which I have visited.

[15]Vallée, interview by author.

an outdoor historical village, the very form of the museum reflects a desire to emulate the pioneer experience. The complex is made up of nine buildings that each interpret a different element of pioneer life. Most of the structures are replicas, although two - the Croteau Home and the Ardmore United Church - are authentic, albeit restored and relocated to the museum grounds. The replica buildings are a railway station, which functions as the main interpretive building where visitors begin their tour; the J.N. Vallée General Merchants Store, which also houses the Duclos and St. Louis Hospital display through a separate outside entrance; a machine shed housing agricultural, blacksmith, and industrial artifacts and a Ford Model T; a North West Company trading post; a teepee from the Long Lake First Nation; Durlingville school house; and the first Roman Catholic church in the area. The grounds are also home to the town of Bonnyville's original water tower, a seven-metre wood statue of fur trader Angus Shaw, and, in front of the main building, a monument to the Francophone pioneers who settled and founded Bonnyville. Inside, the furniture and artifacts, with the exception of the machine shed and the main interpretive building, are arranged to depict the buildings' original contents and function.

Even before reaching the museum the visitor, following a path from the parking lot, is introduced to the pioneer through a prominent metal and cement decorative arch. Bearing the names of the first Francophone families to settle the area in 1907 and 1908, the arch is adorned with images of the Alberta wild rose, stalks of wheat, two joined hands, and a male and a female pioneer holding a pitchfork and a pail. The pioneer remains at the centre of the permanent exhibits in the outbuildings and in the rotating exhibits in the main building. Interpretation is provided through text panels, the majority of which are chronologically

organized and in both official languages. Visitors receive a self-guided walking tour brochure, available in French or English, which explains each of the replica buildings. While this interpretation focusses foremost on the geographic community, because multiculturalism is the means by which the museum has chosen to approach it, ethnicity plays a strong role in the locality's story.[16] French ethnicity is much more apparent in Bonnyville's museum than Anglo-Canadianism is in the Museum of the Highwood, and although Frenchness has been privileged, there has also been a concerted effort to include, primarily through rotating exhibits, the demographically smaller Ukrainian, Aboriginal, and Anglo groups in the district.



Pioneer Arch, Bonnyville and District Museum, Bonnyville, AB, 2002

The main building contains a large exhibit and programming space that plays host to a major rotating exhibit each year, tour groups and the genealogical research programs that the museum administers. Orientation panels, mounted on the wall next to the gallery entrance, are a permanent feature and guide the visitor through a chronological history of Bonnyville, beginning with the arrival of fur trader Angus Shaw in 1789. Two of the thirteen panels are dedicated to the fur trade era before the interpretation turns to the colonizing

[16]The Bonnyville and District Historical Society mission statement reads: "The mission statement for the Society is to search for, display and preserve historical sites, artifacts, folklore, and history of Bonnyville, and surrounding districts, as well as to promote and preserve the multicultural heritage of the Bonnyville community." See *By-laws January 2001,* Bonnyville and District Historical Society, Bonnyville, AB.

priests and settlement. Following from the panels, the artifacts and accompanying text that filled the remainder of the room in summer 2002 were part of a temporary exhibit, *Family and Faith: A Celebration of our Heritage,* that showcased the role of religion in the lives of the pioneers in a multi-faith context by combining pioneer home settings with artifacts from the area's religious communities. In addition to articles of religious and spiritual significance to the area's First Nations and Métis, there were items from the Roman Catholic, United and Ukrainian Orthodox churches. The abundance of Catholic object artifacts reflected the tendency of Catholic churches more than their Protestant counterparts to use material items in worship. It also reflects the museum's collection, and the fact that Bonnyville had been home the Sisters of the Cross, the Soeurs de Evron, and the Sisters of the Assumption, as well as the Oblates of Mary Immaculate.[17] The exhibit's focus on religion was within the context of acknowledging the multi-faith nature of the area and religion as an aspect of pioneer life in the geographic community. The museum connected religion and pioneer life by placing them in the same space. The other three corners of the room contained a pioneer kitchen, bedroom and living room, each equipped with typical artifacts. For instance, a wood cook stove, wash basin, scrub board and sad iron were displayed in the kitchen; quilts, bed shirts and dolls in the bedroom; and a radio, rocking chair and tobacco pipe in the living room.

In contrast to the Bonnyville and High River museums, the Basilian Fathers Museum tells the story of a religious community for whom place is an aspect of their story rather than its backbone. The museum focusses on the Basilian Fathers, the Sisters Servants of Mary

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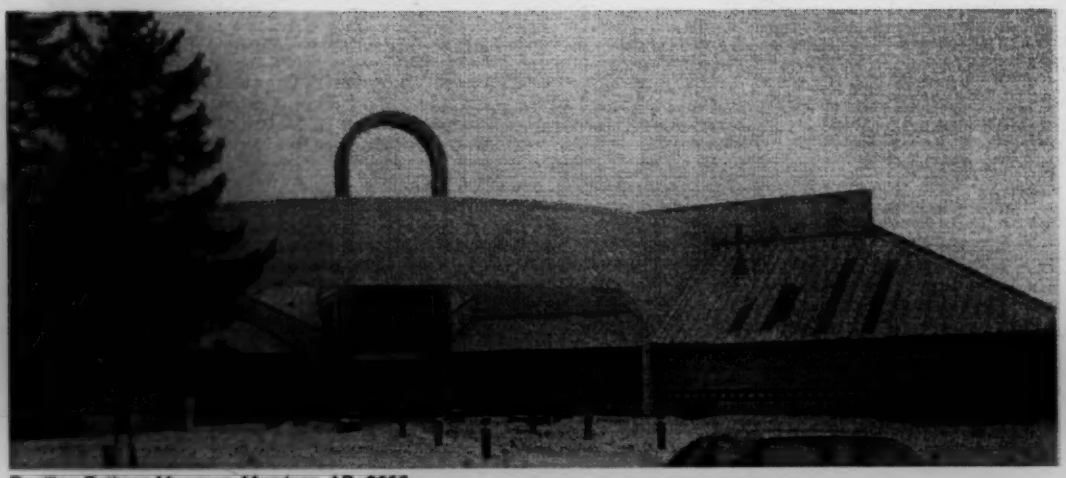
[17]Germaine Prybysh, interview by author, Bonnyville, AB, 28 August 2002.



Basilian Fathers Museum, Mundare, AB, 2002

Immaculate (SSMI) and their Ukrainian Catholic parishioners; an aspect of that story is the Ukrainian bloc settlement east of Edmonton, centring on Mundare, where they lived and worked. The duality of the church and the pioneer appears throughout the museum, epitomized in the depiction of the priests and nuns as pioneers. The architecture of the museum building itself symbolizes both a Ukrainian Catholic church through the arch over the entrance, the interior domes and arches, and the height of the galleries, and a Ukrainian pioneer thatched-roof home through the side "wings."[18] The original SS. Peter and Paul Ukrainian Catholic chapel and the Basilian printing press building - home to the museum from 1953 to 1991 - are also located on the grounds. The visitor to the museum immediately enters an environment that is unmistakably Ukrainian in culture and religion. Ukrainian textiles (the curtains from the original museum), dance headpieces and a miniature replica of the onion-domed second church, built in 1910, decorate the reception area.

The visitor is promptly greeted and encouraged to begin the tour in the theatre with

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[18]"Basilian Fathers Museum Guided Tour Booklet," Basilian Fathers Museum, Mundare, AB, n.d., 1.

New Home in the West Gallery, Basilian Fathers Museum, Mundare, AB, 1998

the 1943 film, the *New Home in the West*, produced by the National Film Board in celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Ukrainian settlement in Canada.[19] After the film, the visitor is ushered into the first gallery where the likewise named *New Home in the West*, the museum's chief permanent exhibit, "presents the story of Ukrainian immigration to Canada."[20] The facades of a "Blek Shmit" (blacksmith) shop; a Ukrainian plastered, white-washed and thatched-roof home; and a wood-frame home with a veranda serve as a backdrop for the artifacts and interpretation. Two pioneer women and a pioneer man stand on the veranda in traditional Ukrainian dress. The women each wear leather boots, a *horbatka* (wrapped panel skirt) and *poias* (sash), an elaborately embroidered blouse and a *hustka* (head wrap). *Kylymy* (Ukrainian woven wool rugs) are draped over the bench and the chairs.

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[19]*New Home in the West*, 14 min., National Film Board of Canada, 1943.

[20]"Prologue," text panel, *A New Home in the West,* Basilian Fathers Museum, Mundare, AB, visited 17 September 2002.

Some artifacts in the exhibit are generic pioneer items: for example, a Medalta crock, blacksmith forge, butter churn and pitch fork. Others - the grindstone, cabbage shredder, bread trough, scythe, flail and seive - are commonly associated with Ukrainian pioneers. Also, using house exteriors as a backdrop, the museum breaks from the norm of depicting the home from the interior and exhibiting artifacts arranged into rooms. The remaining wall hosts a series of text-rich panels presenting the history of Ukrainian immigration to Canada surrounded by historical photographs and emblems of Ukrainian folk culture: a *kylym*, *pysanky* (Easter eggs), and bead works and embroidery. A mural of Mundare, with sunflowers (a popular Ukrainian motif) and a field of wheat stooks (symbolic of the prairies) in the forefront, leads the visitor out of the exhibit, leaving little doubt that ethnicity was an important part of this pioneer experience.

The remainder of the permanent exhibits, with the exception of the final gallery, concentrate on the history of the Basilians, the SSMI, Christianity in Ukraine, and the Ukrainian Catholic Church in Canada and elsewhere. These exhibits serve to reinforce the religious aspect of the pioneer experience that was suggested in the museum's architecture and the prior interpretation. They not only explain the role of religious traditions in the lives of the pioneers but also, through the priests and the nuns, make the church's experience in western Canada tantamount to a pioneer experience. The temporary exhibits in summer 2002 conveyed the same messages about the role of religion for the pioneers. The popular *The Sacred Sacrament of Matrimony - "It is not good that man should be alone,"* showcased wedding photographs, documents and stories from many area residents, while *Flowers of the Bible* featured the paintings of Edmonton artist Larisa Sembaliuk Cheladyn. Other temporary

exhibits, including a number of family histories under the heading *A Century in Canada,* were housed in the theatre. Once a Mundare-area family has been in Canada for 100 years, a panel profiling the family is added and a folder compiled and displayed to tell its history. The final temporary exhibit, *Odds and Ends: A Collector's Extravaganza*, profiled the extensive and eclectic collections of Father Josaphat Jean as one of the museum's founders. Besides involving the local community, these temporary exhibits are an example of how the Basilian Fathers Museum, because the entire collection is not exhibited at once as in many community museums, makes deliberate decisions about what to collect and display. This means that the museum chooses which stories are told and what message it will privilege. Both stories and message are simultaneously religious and ethnic and tied to the pioneer.

A similar theme dominates the Card Home and the Court House Museum in Cardston, but a very different interpretive strategy makes it much less deliberate and thus less overt. Costumed guides use the Card Home, a historic house museum, to explain the history and significance of the Cards as church leaders in particular, and the Mormon pioneer settlement in general. The larger Mormon community of Cardston and southern Alberta is more completely represented at the Court House, a sandstone building finished in 1909 and, like the Card Home, designated as a provincial historic resource. The Court House Museum is an excellent example of the 'community attics' created by volunteers and amateur historians in the early 1980s, as museums engaged in passive collecting through unsolicited donations from community members and seldom turned down a gift.[21] Rather than using artifacts as illustrations for narrative interpretation, the Court House Museum organizes them

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[21]Miller-Marti, 37.

by theme or type under such titles as "Tools," "What we did for fun" and "Turn of the Century Kitchen."[22] Many of the artifacts have labels, mostly identifying them by name, date of manufacture or use and donor; some explain the artifact's significance but there is no purposeful attempt at an overarching storyline. The Cardston and District Historical Society has used the Court House's layout to further this type of organization. With its offices, chambers and basement jail cells, not to mention the large open space of the courtroom itself, the building provides a number of compartments for this kind of display.

On entering the museum, the visitor faces a staircase containing a bust of Charles Ora Card, "Founder of Cardston - Church Leader - First Mayor," rising from its pedestal on the top step; a mural of the trek from Utah by covered wagon on one wall; and a sign commemorating the museum's founders on the other.[23] Although the seats have been removed from the courtroom at the top of the stairs, the bar, witness box and large judge's bench remain, now augmented by a series of display cases running up the centre of the room and along the walls. Every corner is cluttered with artifacts and the walls are generously covered with photographs, artifacts, taxidermy mounts, paintings, and plaques hung with wires. The artifacts in the room represent the family, church and business lives of the community's Mormon founders. The doors from the courtroom to the judge's chambers and the offices have been removed and the rooms arranged to depict a "Turn of the Century" bedroom, kitchen and parlour, and to house a military display with artifacts from Cardston's servicemen from both World Wars and a small collection of minerals from the Cardston area.

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[22]Text panels, Court House Museum, Cardston, AB, visited 2 September 2002.

[23]Text panel, Court House Museum. Members of the Museum Founders Club were donors to the museum's endowment fund.

Courthouse Museum, Cardston, AB, 2002

The Court House basement is home to the Cardston and District Historical Society's archivesand more exhibit space. The hallway at the foot of the stairs is lined with photographs of Cardston athletes and sports teams and panels depicting local "celebrities," among them more athletes, *King Kong* movie star Fay Wray, Mormon church founders, community leaders, and historical society members.[24] One of joining rooms contains another bedroom arrangement; in the other, artifacts from early Cardston businesses such as phones, typewriters and a switchboard, line the walls and sit on tables with very little interpretation. To see the rest of the basement the visitor returns upstairs and to the back of the courtroom where a second set of stairs leads down to a narrow dark hallway and small jail cells that showcase more pioneer artifacts, from tools, cattle yokes, and dairying devices to saddles, branding irons, and baseball uniforms. One cell is interpreted within the context of its original function, with a prisoner tucked under a wool blanket on a metal bed, another is

[24]Text panels, Court House Museum.

equipped as a dentist's office and the last as a school room.

With the exception of the museum's mineral collection, every item represents the pioneer. Again, as with each of the other museums in the study, many of these artifacts would have been found in any pioneer home on the prairies, while others allude to a Mormon experience. Sports, for instance, tended to matter more in Mormon communities than in others, and typically 'American' sports like basketball and baseball were particularly dominant. On the whole, the Mormon pioneer is depicted as less 'rustic' than its counterparts elsewhere and the museum is more likely to privilege silver sets, fine china or silk and lace high-collar dresses than enamelled plates, scrub boards or aprons. Both the fact that the Mormon pioneers came overland from the United States, arriving with numerous wagons and many more possessions than an overseas migration would be likely to allow, and that the original pioneer families were not ordinary settlers but church leaders, of more significant means, fleeing polygamy charges, accounts in part for the greater wealth represented in the museum's collection.

Interspersed with the material culture of the pioneer household is evidence of a Mormon religious heritage, christening gowns, the altar from Cardston's first tabernacle, and photographs of Mormon church leaders and buildings including the Cardston Alberta Temple that established Cardston as the seat of the church in southern Alberta. Because the Court House Museum is internally targeted to the Mormon community, though likely inadvertently so, the pioneer is passively established as exclusively Mormon. Religious artifacts are not more abundant than is typical and textual references are off-hand and muted, but ever present nonetheless. The subtle nature of these references should not be mistaken for a low

1933 Dormitory Building, Danish Canadian National Museum and Gardens, Dickson, AB, 2002

emphasis, rather, that religion is taken for granted, and has permeated every part of the interpretation, so that it need not be identified separately. Further, the passivity of the ethno-religious pioneer in Cardston's museums can be traced directly to the passivity of their approach to the museum's collections and exhibit activities. Religion may seem downplayed because of the lack of formal interpretation, but, to an insider aware of the history of southern Alberta's Mormon country, and the roles of its citizens, buildings, clubs and businesses, the religious aspects of the museum's representation are obvious. The outsider, on the other hand, lacks the code to appreciate the religious and ethnic specificity of the Court House's pioneer. Even the artifact labels, more or less the only source of interpretation, nearly always centre on the donor rather than the artifact itself or its place in the pioneer story. Doing so serves to strengthen the internal community by reinforcing "a sense of belonging and contribution" for community members and their families.[25] For the external visitor, unlikely

[25]Kevin Britz, "Memory, Meaning and Small Museums," *History News* 50:4 (Autumn 1995): 17.

to recognize the donor family names, the connections between most of the museum's artifacts and founding Mormon families and Mormon church institutions are likely to be missed.

In a much different approach to Cardston, very little is understated at the Danish museum, a mainly outdoor site where an ethnic presentation is obvious and the pioneer is juxtaposed with an eclectic collection of old-world folklore images as part of an international Danish story. Everywhere on the seven and one-half acres, the pioneer mingles with the cultural icons of Denmark. The main building, the now restored 1933 girls' high school dormitory, houses a café, gift shop, offices, library, children's story room and exhibit spaces. The grounds, enclosed by a shelter belt of pines and poplar trees, contain a number of flower gardens, a pioneer vegetable garden, and a small grove. A gazebo used for readings of Hans Christian Anderson stories, next to a large bust of the author, begins a series of walking trails dubbed the Children's Garden of Imagination. The trails snake through the trees, across a man-made waterway that is someday to house a Viking ship, and invite the visitor to stop periodically to read Anderson stories posted by wooden cutouts of fairy tale characters or to cross the drawbridge into a miniature castle.[26] The south fork of the path, Homestead Trail, leads past the trenches dug by the original settlers to drain the fields and to the proposed site of a replica homesteader's cabin. The trails end at a man-made pond that is home to the museum's own bronze little mermaid, cast in the approximate likeness of the maiden who watches over Copenhagen harbour. On the banks of this pond also sits the miniature Dagmar Danish Lutheran Church.

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[26]Jean Weltz, interview by author, Dickson, AB, 18 August 2002.

The old-world Danish heritage is the strongest message at the Danish museum and the pioneer shares the stage with many other characters, real and imaginary, from Danish history. While the pioneer is more apparent in the dormitory building, the visitor is not introduced to the figure until the second floor; the main floor exhibits feature items - porcelain, lace and bronzes - from Denmark, donated by Canadian Danes. The upstairs is divided into five rooms: the *Library and Reading Room*, the *Hans Christian Anderson Room*, the *Dormitory Bedroom*, the *Danish History and Artifact Room*, and the *Immigrant Room*. Pioneer items appear in the *Bedroom* and the *History and Artifact Room* through furnishings, kitchen utensils and a miniature of the local church, but the pioneer is strongest in the *Immigrant Room*. It contains artifacts from Danish pioneers - tools, steamer trunks, chaps, a report card, and jewellery - and a number of flip panels that tell the life stories of Canadian Danish pioneers and the institutional histories of the Danish Lutheran churches, schools and seniors' homes they founded across the country. Despite the panel's Canadian focus, prairie place is not dominant and much in them points to an international Danish community. The pioneer appears as part of the story through the Danish immigrant but not always as the leading character. Even in the *Immigrant Room*, where the pioneer is dominant, the pioneer experience is told as an immigration tale that begins with Denmark.

The Chinese museum, even more than the Danish museum, aims to promote and showcase a homeland-based Chinese culture. The centre's ties with China are strong and the Canadian aspect of the Chinese identity, expressed through the idea of multiculturalism, focuses on a Chinese contribution to Canadian culture and society that goes well beyond the pioneer and the settlement era. The building itself, located in the heart of Chinatown in

Chinese Seismograph, Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Museum, Calgary, AB, 2002

downtown Calgary, is visually prominent with its intricately decorated royal blue central dome modelled after China's Temple of Heaven. The main floor is open to provide space for large gatherings and performances, and the second and third floors also open in the centre so that the interior of the dome and the supporting columns, brightly coloured and detailed with gold-leaf, are visible from the main floor. Around the perimeter are classrooms, meeting spaces, an auditorium, an art exhibit space, a library, and retail and professional space. The museum, which shares the lower floor with a restaurant, has a circular floor plan with a number of scale models of the Xian Tomb Terra Cotta Warriors and a horse-drawn chariot, obtained from the China Pavilion at Vancouver's Expo 86, in the centre.[27]

The Terra Cotta Warriors anchor a presentation where the main message is the cultural and scientific legacy of the Chinese people through the ages. Upon entering the museum the visitor is encouraged to watch a video about China's ancient silk road, then,

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[27]Tony Wong, interview by author, Calgary, AB, 30 September 2002.

Our Chosen Land Gallery, Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Museum, Calgary, AB, 2002

armed with a self-guided tour brochure is free to browse through numbered exhibits that display reproduction artifacts from China's past: furniture from the imperial palace, the emperor and empress's court dress, and ceramic, porcelain and bronze pieces. A large tapestry depicting the scientific contributions of the Chinese complements a replica of an early and ornate seismograph, a gun powder display, printing tools, and a bronze reflecting mirror. Along the wall in the back hallway a time-line, pulled from the pages of an exhibit catalogue from the National Palace Museum of Taipei, traces the philosophical, artistic and technological progress of the Chinese against that of the rest of the world. The circular path makes the pioneer the last thing the visitor is directed to see. Opened in 1994 as part of the commemoration of Calgary's centennial, the gallery, *Our Chosen Land: 100 Years of Development of the Chinese Community in Calgary*, is the only place where any connection to Canada is found; it is also where the Chinese pioneer is found.[28] *Our Chosen Land* tells two stories: that of the Chinese in Canada, and that of Calgary's Chinese community, when

[28] "Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Museum," Brochure, English Version, Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre, Calgary, AB, 1999.

the pioneer becomes a lead character.[29] The exhibit combines heavy textual and photographic elements with artifacts depicting what the pioneers brought from China, items belonging to railway workers, Chinese games and music, and restaurant and laundry tools and furnishings. The Chinese pioneer's experience was tragically defined by racism and discrimination on the part of governments, businesses and society. It was also an urban experience, dominated by bachelors or married bachelors, as federal legislation kept wives and children from joining their husbands and fathers in Canada and thus not part of a farming family as is typical in the other institutions. Despite these differences, the pioneer is present and often strong, but situated within multiculturalism as the ideology which enables the Chinese to see themselves as full participants in Canadian and Alberta society.

THE GENERIC PIONEER NARRATIVE

How each ethnic group uses the pioneer figure differs depending on the balance struck between ethnicity and place and the dominance of the homeland or the prairie. Regardless, the capacity for difference fades considerably in the segment of the museums' interpretation that explains the pioneer's experience on the prairie. Whether the prairie pioneer dominates, becomes synonymous with, or is subordinate to ethnicity and/or the homeland, the portion of each group's historical identity that is grounded on the prairie inevitably follows the same narrative and employs the same rhetoric, that of the generic pioneer as conqueror of the land, builder of civilization, and superior moral being. The museums approach each facet using similar aspects of the pioneer experience, artifacts and

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[29]"Preface," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Museum (CCCCM), Calgary, AB, visited 30 September 2002.

representational effects.

The pioneer as conqueror of the land journeys to an empty and harsh wilderness, finds shelter by raising a first meagre home, clears and breaks the land, contends with weather and natural disasters, and harvests the first crop. In the struggle between 'savagery and civilization' the settler learns to respect and understand an alien and often forbidding environment, begins to bend it to human use, and eventually masters it by successfully exploiting its resources. The pioneer as builder of civilization, following from the conquest, introduces religion and education by building churches and schools, and establishes services, professions and businesses. These are often interpreted in the museum through a long string of community 'firsts' that represent the march of progress and the introduction of one more aspect of civilization to the community, be it the first general store, the first sidewalks or the first automobile owned in the area.[30] The presumed emptiness of the West on the pioneers' arrival remains important, as their achievements are often posited with language that heralds how they built Alberta from nothing. The pioneer as builder of civilization also allows for an urban pioneer - one who resided and worked in a town or city - and is, therefore, often the more prevalent part of the interpretation in museums that focus on a community within a city, as in Calgary's Chinatown, or the development of a town, as in High River. The civilizer pioneer incorporates doctors, nurses, teachers, clergy, nuns, lawyers, storekeepers, restauranteurs, and others, giving those who did not work the land a chance to participate in the victory over the wilderness. The pioneer as superior moral being is inherent in both the conqueror and civilizer pioneer and, in fact, facilitates each of them. But if the first two

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[30]Stiles, 34.

components are often illustrated by their actions and quantitative achievements, the moral pioneer is expressed in the museum through character traits and qualitative attributes, particularly faith, hard work, perseverance and loyalty. Faith is sometimes accompanied by piety or moral living. Industriousness, resourcefulness, and progressivism are often equated with hard work, perseverance with suffering and sacrifice. Loyalty is also a key characteristic that finds its voice primarily in the museum's representation of the World Wars. Key words and phrases appear repeatedly in the museum's textual interpretation and form a common rhetoric to express how the pioneer as conqueror and civilizer was able to win the struggle over wilderness.

THE PIONEER AS CONQUEROR

The emptiness, severity and isolation of the wilderness sets the scene for the generic pioneer narrative. These attributes were also the West's biggest public relations problem before settlement began and a considerable obstacle for eastern Canadian expansionists who wished to access and exploit western resources. Prior to Confederation the area that would become the North-West Territories had been touted as Canada's untamed wilderness - empty, foreboding and largely useless for human habitation or exploitation.[31] This perception began to change with more favourable reports from scientists and explorers. A vocal loyalist and expansionist lobby also championed the advantages for Canada in a populated West, especially by creating a market and resource supply for eastern manufacturers and to

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[31]Doug Owram, *The Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856 - 1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 15.

counteract post-Civil War Manifest Destiny rumblings in America.[32] By the 1870s a transcontinental railway had been promised and, as it began to look as though construction was a matter of when, rather than if, settlers began to head West with plans to make their fortunes and, more importantly, to stay. The first Anglo and French settlers, mostly migrants from eastern Canada and the United States, probably had some ideas about what to expect in the West, although the same could not be said for many overseas immigrants, subject to the embellishments and propaganda of government, railway or independent immigration agents. Regardless of their knowledge of the West prior to arrival, the lack of amenities and coming to grips with the harshness of their new environment was an experience shared by all pioneer groups. The relegation of the Native population to reserves and the frequently considerable distance between railway and homestead exaggerated the newcomers' sense of isolation in a seemingly empty land.

In the museum, the pioneer as conqueror mythology begins with the journey to the prairie. Sometimes the journey is billed as a fantastic adventure or an anticipatory trek to a promised land, but just as often it is interpreted as a harrowing and dangerous experience. The difference between the museum's narrative interpretation and the personal accounts of pioneers featured in the museum is often noteworthy. The museum may focus on how the pioneers travelled to their new homes, in stages of steam, animal, water or foot power. The Court House Museum entryway mural, for instance, romantically recalls the covered wagon trek north from Utah; the Bonnyville and District Museum provides a map showing the three routes that settlers followed by stage-coach, ferry, wagon, or barge after they arrived in

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[32]Daniel Francis, *National Dreams: Myth, Memory and Canadian History* (Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 1997), 22-28.

Edmonton by rail.[33] Personal accounts or family histories are more emotive in their description. For instance, one Ukrainian settler's descendants "assumed that the family walked carrying their belongings over the difficult terrain, with no road signs to point their way"; the Danish Fielberg family remember the voyage across the Atlantic for the rough ocean, seasickness, and the trauma of leaving family behind; and the Ukrainian Moszczanski family "describe a hazardous and terrifying voyage in violent Atlantic storms during which their ship was damaged and in danger of sinking."[34]

The reaction of immigrants once they arrived, of course, depended on what they had been expecting. For Ukrainian "land hungry peasants" around Mundare, immigration is interpreted under the title "Canada - The Promised Land."[35] Casting the West as the land of Canaan in this way is a common theme in pioneer stories but unfavourable portrayals of the land are equally present in the community museum and the visitor is not apt to leave with the impression that the environment was pleasant. While Dickson and area's local history, *Grub-Axe to Grain*, and other Danish memoirs suggest that the Alberta prairie was very nearly "a land flowing 'with milk and honey,'" the museum has included several more negative testimonials.[36] For example, in describing the land north of Lloydminster, the Danish museum says that it was "almost criminal to bring settlers to this area."[37] In fact, the

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[33]Mural, Court House Museum; "Colonisation Bonnyville Colonization," panel 8 of same title, *Echos d'Autrefois/Echoes of the Past*, Bonnyville and District Museum, Bonnyville, AB, visited 28 August 2002.

[34]"Koroluk Family," text panel, *A Century in Canada*, Basilian Fathers Museum; "Fielberg Family: De Derovre 'Those over There,'" text panel, *They Came, They Saw, They Stayed*, Danish Canadian National Museum (DCNM), Dickson, AB, visited 18 August 2002; and "Moszczanski Family," text panel, *A Century in Canada*, Basilian Fathers Museum.

[35]"Canada - The Promised Land," text panel, *A New Home in the West*, Basilian Fathers Museum.

[36]C. M. Christiansen, "Dickson: The Dickson Story," in *Grub-Axe to Grain* (Spruceview, Alberta: Spruceview School Area Historical Society, 1973), 29.

[37]"Promise of a New Future from Beginning to Fulfilment," text panel, *Immigrant Room*, DCNM.

Dickson community illustrates why anticipations of a promised land could lead to disappointment. When the first group of Danish settlers to the area considered its move to Alberta, it sent two scouts ahead to verify the claims of CPR immigration agents. The scouts arrived in the winter of 1902 to see cattle grazing on grass growing through the snow. They reported back that the area seemed very fertile but when they returned with their families in the summer they found that the grass was in fact slough grass and the cows had been grazing on the frozen surface of a three- to four-foot deep slough.[38] Already the land did not live up to expectations.

Upon reaching the homestead, the pioneer's first step for survival, and the next act in the narrative, is building a home. "Acquiring shelter for the family was the first priority of the homesteaders," states the "Home is Where the Hearth is" panel at the Basilian Fathers Museum.[39] Each of the six museums addresses the first, often temporary, homes in their settlement, indicating the primacy of the need for shelter, and the pride of pioneers in their first home, but often focussing on how small and spartan this first space was. The building is generally interpreted through a restored home or with mock up displays (more common in indoor museums) to illustrate the interior of the pioneer's home. While the first home symbolizes the pioneers' attempt to find shelter in trying circumstances and a harsh environment, in latter stages of the narrative the home represents much more, perhaps civilization, material prosperity, or family. The simplicity of this original dwelling in contrast to later homes also serves to show how much the pioneers accomplished.

In both Bonnyville and Cardston, homes belonging to the community's first settlers

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[38]Christiansen, 29.

[39]"Home is Where the Hearth is," text panel, *A New Home in the West*, Basilian Fathers Museum.

have been restored and furnished. The Croteau Home in Bonnyville is included to depict the size and simplicity of the first homes in the area. A time-line on the wall documents the many changes and additions to the tiny building before it became a summer kitchen for Madame and Monsieur Croteau and their twelve children. The introductory panels dedicated to the colonization of Bonnyville in the museum building proper also include a number of photographs depicting pioneers standing proudly in front of these first small homes.[40] Cardston also interprets making do with small spaces through the Cards' first home. Interpreters point out to the visitor that the size of the log home, though still a modest building, was larger than typically the case because it was also intended to accommodate community gatherings.[41] The Danish museum has plans to build a homesteader's cabin, but in the meantime, rather than skip this step in the narrative, the panels posted on the wall in the *Immigrant Room* use text, photographs and graphics to depict settlers' homes, including a number of sod shacks. The glass case beneath the panels displays hand tools as samples of those the pioneers might have used "to engineer their own dwellings on their Canadian settlements."[42] The Basilian Fathers Museum has chosen to depict the exterior facade of a typical Ukrainian peasant plastered, white-washed and thatched roof cottage in the *New Home in the West* gallery.[43]

Household items are among the most frequently donated artifacts to community

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[40]"The Croteau House," text panel, Croteau House; and "Colonisation Bonnyville Colonization," text panels, *Echos d'Autrefois/Echoes of the Past*, Bonnyville and District Museum.

[41]Thomas Matkin, interview by author, Cardston, AB, 26 March 2002.

[42]Artifact label, *Immigrant Room*, DCNM.

[43]The Ukrainian settlers' first home was often a sod- and branch-covered dugout called a *burdei*; the traditional plastered, whitewashed and thatched-roof homes followed, to be succeeded, in turn, by the typical prairie Canadian wood frame house. The plastered, whitewashed and thatched-roof homes have become an icon of the Ukrainian homestead experience on the Canadian prairie.

museums and they are often used to interpret the homestead through mock-up rooms mimicking those found in the settler's home, like a bedroom or, most commonly, a kitchen. Bonnyville, Cardston, and High River each do this. In the case of the Chinese, many immigrants found lodging in the back rooms or corners of their place of work. Rather than a homesteader's cabin, the Chinese museum features a Chinese laundry display, identifying the significance of the ironing board: "This table is the place that the Chinese did most of the ironing. At night, it was used as the sleeping bed since they cannot [sic] afford a bed."[44]

The clearing and the breaking of the land provide some of the strongest pioneer imagery and forms the backbone of the conquest of the land mythology. They find a concise and potent symbol in the plow. The outdoor/indoor makeup of the museum dictates how the breaking of the land will be depicted but when space allows it is often interpreted through a plethora of farming instruments. Virtually every small pioneer museum in rural Alberta has its plows and yokes, and even those that purposefully buck that trend deal with this part of the story symbolically or through the personal recollections of pioneers showcased in the museum. "We're definitely not going for stuff that belongs to the outdoors like plows or farm equipment because a lot of other museums already do that," Morton Pedersen of the Danish Canadian National Museum Society told the *Alberta Report*.[45] But even if not present in the Danish museum in its physical manifestation, the plow makes an appearance in spirit, in sacred space in a stained glass window entitled "Sunny Alberta" in Dagmar Lutheran Church. Panels in the *Immigrant Room* also use the image of the plow in their

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[44]Artifact label, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

[45]"A Bit of Denmark in Dickson," *Alberta Report* (10 November 1997): 30.

interpretation of the pioneers who "hewed their farms out of Canadian wilderness."[46] Although the Museum of the Highwood also concentrates on 'inside things,' the breaking of the land is commemorated in the "Farming" diorama which makes mention of John Glenn, "our first known farmer," who "broke the land, seeded oats and barley by hand and harvested the crop with a scythe."[47] The Bonnyville and District Museum, the Cardston Court House, and the Basilian Fathers Museum in Mundare each display plows and other farm implements, although the two latter, being indoor museums, are limited to smaller items. Bonnyville has a number of large pieces of farm machinery, from steam tractors to threshing machines, stored both in the machinery shed and lined up outdoors for the enthusiast to examine.

Traditionally, farm machines and implements were the tools of male pioneers, while household items were identified with women. Of course, bachelor pioneers would have counted pots and pans within the realm of their experience and many women spent long hours in the fields, but work in the pioneer era was gendered and these divisions appear in the museum as well. Gender features strongly in the interpretation when the narrative addresses an exclusively indoor or outdoor story. Not surprisingly, the farmers in High River's ranching and farming dioramas are male and the mannequins in Cardston's kitchen display and in the Card Home are female. Whether the agricultural or the domestic side of the story is privileged over the other seems to be tied more to the type of available exhibit space, indoor or outdoor, than to any other factor. It should also be noted that in the interpretation of the traditionally male activity of breaking and working the land, both the

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[46] "Promise of a New Future from Beginning to Fulfilment," text panel, *Immigrant Room*, DCNM.

[47] "Farming," text panel, Museum of the Highwood.

Basilian Fathers Museum and the Danish museum draw attention to the fact that, especially in the first years, women and children made a significant contribution while husbands and fathers were away working for much needed cash.[48]

None of the six museums give the impression that the wilderness was overcome easily. After all, the conquest came step by step, not all at once, with many natural tribulations to test the resolve of the pioneer. These hardships make up an important part of the interpretation. Natural disasters, extreme temperatures, and, of course, drought, particularly during the Great Depression, are all presented as part of the prairie experience. They also often provide the opportunity to discuss the pioneer's superior character, as all three major qualities - faith, hard work and perseverance - were necessary to prevail against nature in the West. Thus, High River remembers droughts, grasshoppers, winds, swollen rivers, and prairie fires; Bonnyville recalls harsh winters; Dickson evokes dust storms and winter blizzards; and Cardston depicts ferocious animals (including a grizzly bear among the taxidermy specimens at the Court House). The pioneers' struggle against the forces of nature or between savagery and civilization culminates with the "results of their toil" redeemed in the crops they have grown.[49] The material culture of the harvest - the scythe, threshers, and grain separators - and the images of fields or stalks of wheat also appear in great abundance. The harvest is the climax of the pioneer narrative because it marks the point at which the pioneer has conquered the land and bent it to human use. What follows is the building of the pioneer's kingdom, bringing civilization to the conquered wilderness.

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[48]"Home is Where the Hearth Is," text panel, *A New Home in the West*, Basilian Fathers Museum; and "My Heritage, My Life - Andy Kjearsgaard," text panel, *They Came, They Saw, They Stayed*, DCNM.

[49]"Farming," text panel, Museum of the Highwood.

For those who did not settle on and work the land, the victory over wilderness is expressed differently but seldom completely missing. In cases where the community's pioneer experience was mostly urban, as in Calgary Chinatown, High River, and to a lesser extent Cardston, the bulk of the museum's interpretation begins at the point of civilization building, but, significantly, none of these three museums excludes the conquering of the land phase. For the Chinese it plays a very minor role. Significantly though, the narrative structure, of arriving in a strange land, learning and adjusting to the circumstances, and, through hard work and perseverance, rising over adversity, remains the same even though success comes at a different time and over a different foe. The Chinese museum could have interpreted a conquering of the land as in many cases the Chinese immigrant's pioneer experience began as a CPR labourer cutting through the Rocky Mountains - breaking rock rather than sod - as is illustrated through photographs depicting Chinese railway workers amidst blasted rock. Instead, the struggle against the land is supplanted by racism. Rather than survival against the elements there was survival in the face of urban poverty; in place of unbroken or brush-covered land there was discriminatory legislation and treatment. Even the railway story is driven by racism and the case that contains artifacts donated by Chinese railway workers is in the "Discrimination and Racism" section of the gallery. A spike hammer, spikes and piece of rail are displayed together with a head tax certificate and a *Railroad Handbook for Chinese Workers* that, the artifact label explains, was a phrase book where English words were 'translated' by replacing them with similar sounding Chinese words.[50] As attitudes not land required conquering, the climax for the Chinese narrative was

[50]Artifact label, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

longer coming and occurs in 1947 when the repeal of the Exclusion Act triggered a "change from an inhospitable to a more accepting attitude towards Chinese Canadians."[51] Despite the differences in the timing and hardships faced in the Chinese pioneer story, however, the narrative structure holds constant and as it moves into the next facet, that of the pioneer as civilizer, the Chinese pioneer joins the more typical narrative.

THE PIONEER AS CIVILIZER

The land continues to play an adversarial role in the mythology of the pioneer as builder of civilization in that the threat of descent into savagery remains, but how the pioneer confronts it differs. For the civilizing pioneer the adversary is not the wildness of the land but rather its emptiness and the lack of amenities, infrastructure and social structure, all of which sparked a building period. The pioneer as civilizer is depicted through individual and community accumulation of material goods, wealth and property. An element of hardship exists, but with the struggle for sheer physical survival less urgent, the new hardships become things like bad roads and a lack of consumer goods, as the temporary exhibits at the Museum of the Highwood depicted. Progressive communities had a full range of services and businesses and residents with nice houses, automobiles and modern conveniences. The drive for civilization was fuelled by a desire to improve the community's quality of life for the sake of comfort and convenience, but more importantly, by a desire for gentility, symbolized by religion, education and culture, and for progress, through the development of businesses, services and infrastructure. The museum represents these things by interpreting the buildings that housed them, proud of how each new addition furthered the physical growth and importance of the

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[51]"1947-1967: (Repeal of Chinese Exclusion Act)," text panel, *Our Chosen Land,* CCCCM.

community.

Interestingly, in almost every case, the pioneer's first step to bring civilization to the prairie involved building a church and a school, generally in that order.[52] In some cases religion preceded settlement, as with the French in Bonnyville, brought to settle by missionaries already operating in the area; for the Danes and Mormons who moved as religious groups, the church organization came with them; for the Ukrainians, the church followed settlement. Interpretation of the pioneer's struggle for physical survival does include religion, in the form of faith and piety, but building shelter, breaking the land and harvesting the first crops took precedence over a formal church structure. Once the pioneer's basic material needs had been meet, however, building a church became a priority. The Basilian Fathers Museum describes this pattern in the *New Home in the West* exhibit:

> After the settlers had met their basic needs, they turned their attention to providing for their spiritual and social well-being. In many Ukrainian settlements the first community structure to appear was a church, reflecting the strong attachment of the immigrants to their Christian faith with its blend of ancient rituals and folk customs. Similarly, the construction of schools and community centres were important indicators that a colony was beginning to look beyond matters of mere survival.[53]

The presence of a church in the community was the first sign of civility as well as a testament to the character of its members. Despite differences in interpretive strategies, each of the museums in Bonnyville, Dickson, Mundare, and Cardston feature the community's

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[52]Paul Voisey, *Vulcan,* 175, identifies the school and post office as the first institutions built in a new community. In High River, a town approximately fifty kilometres from Vulcan, the pattern he establishes holds. However, in most of the other communities in this study either the church preceded the school or the school is interpreted as secondary to a church. Also, Voisey identifies the church as often an external influence, planted in the community as a result of outside missionary activity. In contrast, the communities that deal at length with the church in their museum - Bonnyville, Mundare, Dickson and Cardston - all interpret the church as a product of internal grassroots initiatives. Whatever the order or origin, the church and the school, as Voisey argues, were part of the same push to civilize the prairies, both serving to instill old-world tradition and morality.

[53]"Home is Where the Hearth is," text panel, *A New Home in the West*, Basilian Fathers Museum.

first church building: Bonnyville through the first Roman Catholic church replica and the relocated Ardmore United Church; Mundare through the first SS. Peter and Paul (pioneer) chapel; Dickson through a model-sized replica of Bethany Lutheran church, their first church building. Among the Mormons several church buildings served different functions in the community and all are represented through artifacts, photographs and text. The Court House Museum displays the pulpit from the demolished Alberta Stake Tabernacle and the Card Home the organ from the Assembly Hall with the dramatic tale of its rescue as the Hall burned. The Alberta Temple, completed in 1923, is the most significant of these Mormon buildings in both religious importance and architecture, and as a symbol of establishing religion on the prairies is more akin to the first churches in the other settlements despite its relatively late appearance. The Alberta Temple is prominent in both Cardston museums particularly through a large number of construction and dedication photographs.

For the Chinese in Calgary and the Anglo-Canadians in High River religion plays a much smaller role, but even these museums mention church institutions in respect to the establishment and growth of the community. In fact, in both cases this is the only context where the church appears. The Chinese who settled in Calgary generally came from a Confucian, Taoist or Buddhist background, but for a number of reasons they did not build religious buildings, although they did establish a Chinese cemetery. The practice of traditional Chinese religion is only subtly depicted in the museum, even more subtly in the *Our Chosen Land* gallery. Some Chinese did convert to Christianity and the Chinese Mission, established by the Reverend J.C. Herdman, a Presbyterian minister, and Thomas Underwood, Calgary's mayor from 1902 to 1903 and himself a Baptist minister, did become

a community centre. The mission, later the YMCA, is represented twice in the text and in two photographs as well as in a team photograph of the YMCA hockey team, all within the context of explaining Chinatown's development. The second Calgary Chinatown grew up around the mission where Herdman rented properties to Chinese businessmen. In the Museum of the Highwood religion is curiously understated but even so, the text panels accompanying both the "High River" and "Blackie" dioramas - in describing "thriving" communities and their "tremendous growth" - list churches as an indicator of a healthy community. Even in a museum where religion plays a very minor role, churches are still included in the list of establishments that constituted the first signs of 'civilization.'[54]

Schools are included on such lists and in the interpretation for much the same reasons, serving as symbols of permanency and establishment in a community. Through photographs and text, the school is interpreted at the Chinese museum and the Basilian Fathers Museum. The Museum of the Highwood uses the one-room school house on the Sheppard Family Park grounds in its educational programming so that children can experience a pioneer classroom. The Bonnyville and District Museum interprets the first school in the area through the reconstruction of the Durlingville school and the first school in the town through a text panel and photographs. The opening of the first high school in Dickson was seen by Danish settlers as great progress, a conviction depicted through the text and the museum building itself which was the girls' dormitory for the high school. The Cardston Court House Museum presents the school representatively in the small school room display in a basement jail cell.

The church and the school are crucial components in a string of 'firsts' that make up

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[54]"High River" and "Blackie," text panels and dioramas, Museum of the Highwood.

the telling of a community's development and much of the interpretation at most pioneer museums. These firsts involve a broad and eclectic mix of individual and family milestones as well as the earliest organizations, professionals and businesses. Firsts denote the building of a social and economic structure and together with 'progress' are often interpreted as the 'foundations' from which the community, province and country were able to evolve. The first white woman or child born in a community is sometimes touted as a sign of civilization, as are the first baptisms or marriages because they indicate the presence of white families. Both marriages and baptisms, symbols of the church as well as the family, are interpreted on the walls of the Roman Catholic church at the Bonnyville and District Museum.[55] Other individual firsts and signs of prosperity are also important to progress, and both Cardston and High River note the first car owned in the area and display a richly furnished sitting room. The Basilian Fathers Museum notes that "one sign of progress was when Canadian-style frame houses began to replace the old fashioned, thatched-roof homes," and suggests that the construction of frame houses with verandas, like the one in the main gallery, were evidence of a degree of prosperity among Ukrainian settlers.[56] High River also boasts of modern amenities such as cement sidewalks and electric lights, as well as the newspaper, curling and skating rinks and opera house that made High River "a fine leading example of quality living which still holds true today."[57] The *Motoring* exhibit profiles the technological advance and leisure opportunities that came with the automobile and includes electrically lit service station signs, a duster jacket and driving hat, and a set of golf clubs in its display.

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[55]"Paroisse St. Louis Parish," text panel, Roman Catholic Church, Bonnyville and District Museum.

[56]"Home is Where the Hearth is," text panel, *A New Home in the West*, Basilian Fathers Museum.

[57]"High River," text panel, Museum of the Highwood.

For their part, businesses, services and professionals are interpreted both for their 'firsts' and for their part in the march of progress and technological advancement. Pioneer museums see them as symbols of growth and development and of the relative importance of the community by boasting of the number, variety or significance of its enterprises. The interpreter at the Basilian Fathers Museum points out on the mural in the *New Home in the West* gallery that Mundare once had eight grain elevators,[58] while the Museum of the Highwood notes that Cayley was "the biggest shipping point for cattle in western Canada."[59] Businesses are also interpreted for the skills and work ethic of their proprietors and as evidence of stability and prosperity on the part of their patrons. The lengthy list of business firsts in the museums of the six communities in this study include banks, barber shops, billiards rooms, blacksmith shops, clothing stores, creameries, elevators, general stores, groceries, hotels, laundries, liveries, market gardens, mechanic shops, newspapers, oil companies, post offices, real estate offices, restaurants, telegraph offices, stockyards and a sausage factory. The first clergy, doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers and mayors are also recognized and honoured, as are the first fire departments and hospitals. The Bonnyville and District Museum interprets the first hospitals in Bonnyville; the Basilian Fathers Museum depicts the General Hospital and orphanage operated by the SSMI in photographs; and the Court House Museum showcases the medical bag and other artifacts belonging to the settlement's first doctor. Sometimes these exhibits stress that the "original immigrants brought many skills," other times they boast of the talents produced in and by the new

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[58]The mural of Mundare in the 1920s in the *A New Home in the West* gallery shows seven elevators; See "Basilian Fathers Guided Tour Booklet," 4.

[59]"Cayley," text panel, Museum of the Highwood.

community.[60] In Bonnyville and District Museum, for example, a label underneath a newspaper on the Durlingville school wall reads: "Orvila Baril, a former Durlingville School student, became the editor of the *Bonnyville Tribune*, a weekly newspaper," as a testament to the community's ability to produce successful citizens.[61] Through such profiles, the museum communicates the contribution made by the pioneers in laying the foundations for civilization and the credit due for the society that grew from them.

THE PIONEER AS SUPERIOR MORAL BEING

Evidence of the pioneer's personal strength of character is the crux of the pioneer narrative. Joanne Stiles suggests that strength of character is more important to the story than the pioneer's deeds.[62] In fact, the narrative is positioned so that the latter could not have occurred without the former. For example, the Danish museum suggests of Danish immigrants on looking upon the "endless forest" that "many of the weaker hearts, whose hopes had been reduced to dust and ashes at the sight of their new home, sought solace in useless tears. The stouter characters, however, faced the future with grim determination."[63] The ability of the pioneers to conquer the wilderness and build a new civilization from nothing is depicted as possible because of qualities the pioneers possessed. These qualities are not gender specific, appear interspersed throughout the exhibit text (especially in the personal reminiscences and family histories), and often serve as themes and slogans for exhibits. The most commonly cited qualities of faith, hard work and perseverance, plus a host

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[60]"They Came - They saw, They Stayed," text panel, *They Came, They Saw, They Stayed*, DCNM.

[61]Artifact label, Durlingville School, Bonnyville and District Museum.

[62]Stiles, 27.

[63]Text panel, *Immigrant Room*, DCNM.

of synonyms, are ubiquitous in the museum. Moreover, they are key to the interpretation as they are what make heroic the efforts put in by the pioneers to conquer and civilize the West.

Faith appears in the museum in a number of ways. Temporary exhibits such as *Family and Faith* in Bonnyville and *The Sacred Sacrament of Matrimony* at the Basilian Fathers Museum allow museums to personalize faith in the pioneer. Stories about particular individuals often feature faith as what got them through the difficulties of pioneer life. For instance, of the Ukrainian Hawryluks at the Basilian Fathers Museum it was stated: "Throughout all these ups and downs over the years, Josaphat and Maria, as well as their children, derived great strength and joy from their involvement in church life."[64] Similarly, Marie Christensen at the Danish museum "credited her strong religious faith in giving her such a wholesome life."[65] Phrases that invoke faith and piety as a means for coping with or surviving hardships or as the motivation for actions are common. The "Dane's Legacy is Faith in Action" panel at the Danish museum relates how pioneers established the Lutheran Welfare Society because "their motivation was their belief their Christian faith meant doing, not just believing."[66] Faith is demonstrated throughout the museums by representation of organized religion and church bodies but it is most apparent in the abundance of artifacts of personal significance to the pioneer. Material evidence of faith is displayed by both the Mormons and the Danes through a multitude of personal religious articles such as family Bibles, christening gowns, prayer books, hymns books and cross pendants.

Hard work as a quality hailed in the pioneers, is often considered inherent; otherwise,

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[64]"The Story of the Hawryluk Store: Josaphat and Mary Hawryluk," text panel, Basilian Fathers Museum.

[65]"Ejnar George Christensen," text panel, *They Came, They Saw, They Stayed*, DCNM.

[66]"Dane's Legacy is Faith in Action," text panel, *They Came, They Saw, They Stayed*, DCNM.

they either would never have come to the West or would not have stayed. In Bonnyville's case, settlers were invited as colonists based on their capacity to work. It is said of the colonizing priest, Father Therien, that "he insisted that one must be ready to work hard in order to build a new home as one must undergo the new lifestyle of the Canadian West."[67] Aksel Sandemose, a Danish emigration writer often very critical of conditions in Canada, is quoted in the Danish museum as describing the ideal immigrant as "a farmer, preferably one with no land, . . . under 35 and willing to work with his hands for long hours at a stretch. That type of person could survive and even become very successful."[68] Long hours were also part of the urban survival experience, making the principle of hard work essential to the Chinese museum's representation of the pioneer:

> Chinese had to work very hard to make a living. Restaurants and groceries had to open early in the morning and close late at night in order to make a profit. There were no breaks; non-stop work seven days a week. Everybody worked fifteen or eighteen hours a day and received twenty five to thirty dollars per month. Laundry work was especially wearisome, because it meant the soaking, scrubbing and ironing of clothing solely by hand.[69]

The adjectives that reveal the hard-working nature of the pioneers are as important in the interpretation as the work or the people they describe. This can be seen in the text panels accompanying the dioramas in the Museum of the Highwood: "VISION, DETERMINATION and COURAGE were the attributes of pioneer families drawn to farming"; "ADVENTUROUS, SPIRITED and RESOURCEFUL described the ranchers"; "cattlemen needed to be skilled and quick-thinking to survive"; and, "PROGRESSIVE,

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[67]"Missionaries - Missionnaires," text panel, *Echos d'Autrefois/Echoes of the Past*, Bonnyville and District Museum.

[68]"Aksel Sandemose and Canada," text panel, *They Came, They Saw, They Stayed*, DCNM.

[69]"Employment and Occupations," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

INNOVATIVE and BUSTLING identified High River in the early 1900's."[70]

A close relative of hard work is perseverance, with its companion qualities of patience, sacrifice and suffering, and they are often discussed together. For example, the Basilian Fathers Museum states, "through hard work and perseverance, these [Ukrainian] pioneers overcame many adversaries to clear a path for their decedents and later immigrants."[71] Sometimes the patience of pioneers was tried, and sacrifices made, in everyday ways like the lack of entertainment. The Danish museum points out that "sometimes immigrant children had few toys to play with." Similarly, the Museum of the Highwood suggests that in Christmas mail order decisions, "more often than not, painful choices had to be made . . . an ordinary doll instead of an Eaton's Beauty, a wind-up train instead of an electric one, a set of emasculators instead of a set of dishes."[72] Other times perseverance is identified with pioneers enduring more difficult challenges, like the "great terror loneliness" related by Danish settlers, or the "injustices, hostilities and hardships" faced by the Chinese.[73]

Lastly, the museum depicts the pioneers as model citizens based on their commitment to their communities and their loyalty to the Crown. Personal stories are often brought to a close with a list of the individual's activities in a host of clubs, auxiliaries, leagues, teams, and societies. Citizenship is also demonstrated through the interpretation of celebrations of national holidays like Dominion Day and dates of significance to the British crown. The strongest statement of loyalty, however, is found in the museum's interpretation of military

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[70]"Farming," "Ranching" and "High River," text panels, Museum of the Highwood. Emphasis theirs.

[71]"The Exodus from Eastern Europe," text panel, *A New Home in the West*, Basilian Fathers Museum.

[72]Artifact label, downstairs gallery, DCNM; and "Around the Kitchen Table," text panel, *The Mail Order Phenomena*, Museum of the Highwood.

[73]"Promise of a New Future from Beginning to Fulfilment," text panel, *Immigrant Room*, DCNM; and "Preface," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

service. The Basilian Fathers Museum emphasizes the commitment of Ukrainian-Canadian volunteers in the Second World War through its orientation film, *A New Home in the West*, produced in 1941.[74] The Chinese museum credits the Second World War as the turning point in public perceptions of the Chinese and proudly acclaims the service of five hundred Canadian-born Chinese and the Chinese community's fundraising efforts, realizing 10 million dollars, as a major reason.[75] These Chinese and Ukrainian statements of loyalty are particularly important as they represent an attempt to counter discrimination and popular perceptions about the two peoples' suitability as citizens. In the other museums the representation of the World Wars aims less to vindicate once suspect peoples and more to honour the community's service men and women. The Court House Museum has a room devoted to Cardston's soldiers, including photographs, wartime newspapers, uniforms and a wheelchair and prosthetic limbs used by an injured veteran.[76] The Museum of the Highwood has two drawers of artifacts devoted to the World Wars, including uniforms, rations coupons and a Sailor's New Testament.[77] The Danish museum relays a number of stories about Danes who served in the Canadian military.[78] The Bonnyville museum's location on the main highway between the Edmonton and Cold Lake Canadian Forces bases brings in many military families. As such, its exhibit on remembering the wars - with weapons, uniforms, medals, the poem "In Flanders Fields" and early Remembrance Day posters - had a present-day component in a condolence book for the families of four

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[74] *A New Home in the West*, National Film Board of Canada.

[75] "1947 - 1967 (Repeal of Chinese Exclusion Act)," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

[76] Military exhibit, Court House Museum.

[77] Artifact drawers, Museum of the Highwood.

[78] Text panels, *They Came, They Saw, They Stayed*, DCNM.

Canadian soldiers killed in service in Afghanistan that spring.[79]

The Second World War generally marks the chronological end of the museums' interpretation of the pioneer and in fact constitutes the last event deemed pertinent to Alberta history; few pioneer museums depict life in their communities past 1950 in any significant way. That said, the flexibility of museum representation allows inconsistencies in time and place to exist in museum exhibits, as artifacts and ideas can be invested with meaning simply by the context in which they are posed. The role of citizenship and loyalty to the Crown is one example of how this happens. Canadian national symbols like the Maple Leaf Flag, adopted in 1965, and royal paraphernalia primarily related to Queen Elizabeth II, who ascended to the throne in 1952, often appear in the midst of pioneer artifacts and the settlement era narrative. Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her golden jubilee in 2002, and her jubilee photograph was circulated by the lieutenant governor to all of Alberta's museums. A number of them, including Bonnyville and District and the Museum of the Highwood, used it to produce special exhibits with artifacts representing the monarchy, including newspaper and magazine clippings, plates, spoons and tea cups, coins, programs and scrap books devoted to things like the 1939 royal visit to Canada. While these initiatives were a response to a specific stimulus, they were still significant in that these museums felt that the royal celebration fell within their mandate, as few, if any, other current events are represented in most community museums. Perhaps more significantly, the Danish museum and the Court House Museum had a number of items depicting the British monarchy that were on regular display. In Dickson, the jubilee photograph was hung in the library where

[79]Entrance exhibit, Bonnyville and District Museum.

a number of clippings from the British royal family mingled with those of Danish royals and politicians like Winston Churchill and Pierre Elliot Trudeau. In Cardston, the jubilee photograph was propped next to a "Confederation Quilt," (with a block depicting the map of Canada, the Maple Leaf Flag and the Union Jack above one for every province and territory). Many of these artifacts are obviously not from the pioneer period, but many of them would have been collected and donated by the pioneers in their later years. In any event, the fact that they are included in the interpretation, when very few post 1950 artifacts are present, makes a meaningful statement about what the pioneers, or their descendants, value about being a Canadian citizen.

The generic pioneer allows the ethnic community museum to represent a shared Alberta patrimony and to display the segment of the prairie pioneer experience that was, to some extent, common to each of the groups in this study. Museum representations are fluid and layered, however, and in the ethnic museum the pioneer can signify membership in two different communities. The mainstream pioneer, the generic, is a stock character with obligatory elements, iconic qualities and a story that follows a common structured narrative pattern as the backbone for the rest of the interpretation. On the other hand, the ethnic pioneer is specific, with elements and qualities unique to the group and grounded in another place. In the museum these personas blend and the pioneer is at the same time mainstream and ethnic, generic and specific, and as such defines, explains and validates the duality of ethnic identity in a plural society.

CHAPTER 3

THE ETHNIC PIONEER IN THE COMMUNITY MUSEUM

In order to tell the Alberta portion of their story, ethnic community museums adopted the generic pioneer narrative that had developed in mainstream museums in the province. At the same time, to represent a particular ethnic experience the generic pioneer narrative was fused with selected elements of the group's heritage - the material culture, traditions, and even ethos - brought by the settlers from the homeland.[1] This fusion occurs in three ways: through values that share elements with the generic narrative and can thereby easily be woven into it; through purely sensory elements that make the pioneer look, sound or act ethnic; and through symbols and mythologies that belong to the homeland and have no significance to the prairie ethnic experience save their existence in the memory or imagination of the immigrant and his or her descendants. These elements intertwine with the generic narrative to create an ethnic regional identity that is invented on the prairie but that exists in two separate places, Alberta and the homeland. The prairie component is almost without exception bound to a particular time, the pioneer/settlement era, generally terminating by 1950. The homeland component is not limited in time and embodies symbols and episodes selected from the whole of the homeland's cultural heritage tradition, encompassing a period that can date back to prehistory and be as recent as today's news. The degree to which the generic or the ethnic pioneer dominates varies from museum to museum

[1]Homeland is used in this context to denote the place where a settler group originally came from, understanding that some spent a period of time in other locations between leaving their native land and settling on the Alberta prairie, usually the United States or eastern Canada. In the case of those who migrated from other parts of Canada, the homeland is the province or region they called home before relocating.

and is related to two factors. One is the ethno-geographic, ethno-religious, or ethno-cultural nature of the community being represented. The other is the experience of the ethnic group in terms of 'elite' influences at both the time of settlement and subsequently, and the group's corresponding response to the forces of assimilation, integration and cultural maintenance.

The duality of the ethnic pioneer's historical identity invites a dual theoretical framework in its analysis. Contrasting the frontier and the metropolitan theses has long been popular in Canadian historiography, but seldom applied to ethnic groups. To explain the ethnic pioneer in the museum, however, each theory informs a different dimension of the narrative. The frontier thesis sees the prairie experience as created in the West, born naturally of the prairie place and free from the encumbrances of the old world. The metropolitan thesis sees the prairie experience as shaped by the traditions and wishes of established centres, acting on their hinterlands through a hierarchical continuum of influence that credits older centres with the creation and ownership of the prairie identity. While the frontier experience determines the generic narrative, metropolitan influences determine the expression of ethnicity, with the relationship between the two ultimately responsible for how the pioneer appears in the museum.

METROPOLITANISM AND HOMELAND

Metropolitanism evolved from the work of a number of Canadian historians but found its strongest champion in J.M.S. Careless, who coined its most descriptive phraseology in the "feudal chain of vassalage."[2] For Careless, established urban centres drive the

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[2]J.M.S. Careless, "Frontierism, Metropolitanism, and Canadian History," in *Approaches to Canadian History,* ed. Carl Berger (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 79.

development of the West. Each centre exerted controlling economic, political, social and cultural influences on its hinterland and was, itself, dominated by the next largest centre up the line. Power was traced back to large metropolitan centres in the East, Toronto and Montreal, and ultimately to London.[3] In settlement-era Alberta, there was little question that mainstream political institutions and economic forces found their direction in established eastern power centres, especially in their structure and intellectual antecedents. Anglo-dominated communities like High River reflected this pattern, or at least expressed signs of strong influences from Ontario and Britain mingling with homegrown influences and environmental determinants. The importance to French Canadian settlement in the West of the Roman Catholic Church and western Oblate missionaries who received support, albeit weak at times, from the church and a colonization office in Montreal, both created ties with Quebec and represented an attempt to extend its hinterland by establishing a French presence in the West.[4] For other ethnic groups, the dominant metropolitan influence came from outside Canada, whether in the form of church and social organizations, traditions, or kin relationships. For Ukrainians, Danes and the Chinese, the pioneer's ethnic elements come broadly from, the homeland (sometimes a specific region), while in the case of the Mormons, a single metropolitan centre, Salt Lake City, provides guidance. The influence these outside forces exert depends on a number of factors, especially the role that place plays in community identity, the experience of the ethnic group in Alberta and the nature and strength of the relationship with the homeland through cultural and kin networks and renewal via new

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[3]Ibid., 79-83.

[4]Robert Painchaud, "French Canadian Historiography and Franco-Catholic Settlement in Western Canada, 1870-1915," *Canadian Historical Review* 59:4 (December 1978): 456-458; and A.I. Silver, "French Canada and the Prairie Frontier, 1870-1890," *Canadian Historical Review* 50:1 (March 1969): 11.

immigration. The stronger the relationship with the homeland, even if only imagined, the stronger the role of the homeland-based material culture, tradition and ethos in the museum.

The extent to which an outside place affects a group identity is inversely related to the importance of the prairie place in the ethno-geographic, ethno-religious or ethno-cultural community and museum. The three means by which ethnicity is present in the museum are also linked to this continuum. Some ethnic elements imported from the homeland blend easily with the pioneer, particularly qualities that represent the characteristics the pioneer is hailed for, like faith, hard work and perseverance, or that illuminate some aspect of the generic narrative. Other elements, notably the material culture and traditions that of homeland, or the things that the pioneer wears, speaks, makes, uses and eats, are layered with those of the generic pioneer figure. Finally, artifacts and symbols that serve only to evoke imagery and history associated with the homeland are most prevalent in the ethno-cultural and ethno-religious museum, while in the ethno-geographic museum there is very little that cannot be linked to a prairie experience.

In both Bonnyville and High River, ethno-geographic communities, the strongest place is the prairie, with French and Anglo ethnicity in the museum most apparent in those parts of their stories that illustrate ties with Quebec and Ontario, respectively, while furthering the generic narrative. The community of High River enjoyed an unequivocal and unquestioned membership in mainstream Alberta, comprised as it was of Anglo-Canadians and British expatriates, so that little in its identity is extraneous to the generic pioneer. Ethnicity, in fact, is a difficult concept in the museum as ethnic is seen as something that other groups are. For both High River and Bonnyville, though, a crystalizing western

regional identity reduced the importance of outside points of reference, a development reflected in their museums as well, though some signs remain, in particular in the interpretation of the Roman Catholic Church in Bonnyville. Also, the fading role of the French in the Alberta mainstream has made the French fact and a French story something that needs to be rescued and told rather than assumed. Therefore, while ethnicity is not Bonnyville's primary story, it is still clearly interpreted as part of the pioneer experience. What is most significant about the external influences in these two ethno-geographic museums is that there is little consciousness or conceptualization of the pioneer as coming from a particular place. "What happened before settlement?" - which the other groups answer with "we lived in such and such a place" - is not important, leaving the factors that pushed and pulled the original settlers to the Canadian West largely unaddressed. The important point in the ethno-geographic pioneer's story is arrival, and the only important place the prairie. The prelude to the pioneer story is not life in Britain, Ontario, Quebec or the United States but the prairie and the First Nations who resided there, a focus that is virtually absent in the museums of the other four groups.

For the ethno-religious groups, the Ukrainians and the Mormons, the communities they were situated in had significance as religious centres and therefore as mission centres, albeit primarily for their own followers rather than those outside the fold. In this respect, they became metropolises in their own right and had a significant impact on their own religious hinterlands. Because of this anchor, the prairie plays a significant part in both Ukrainian and Mormon identity but each group also maintains a relationship with and attachment to the homeland. In fact, that the Ukrainian and Mormon stories in their

museums are overwhelmingly pioneer stories rests, in part, on strong parallels with their homeland stories and the religious significance attached to the land. For the Mormons, the trek to and pioneering experience in Utah in the late 1840s, fewer than fifty years before coming to Alberta, is central to their historical consciousness. The children of the original Utah pioneers - the best known perhaps Zina Young Card, daughter of Brigham Young who led the Utah movement - continue that tradition with their trek to Canada. Also, LDS theology teaches that the North American continent will be the site of Christ's second coming, where the church will someday be restored, making the land, including that in southern Alberta, important to their conception of themselves.[5] For the Ukrainians who settled in the Mundare area, their lives were rooted in a centuries-old tradition of peasantry and farming where the focus on the land was a deep-seated part of their identity, reflected in pre-Christian religious festivals and folk customs that became a part of church traditions. The importance of land to the spiritual definition of both Mormons and Ukrainians has resulted in the prairie playing a very strong role in their museums. Religion as a strong ethnic element is also compatible with the generic pioneer because of that narrative's emphasis on faith and the link between religion and civilization building. Finally, the Ukrainians' perception of themselves as a peasant people becomes an ethnic identification that attaches easily to the pioneer with its requisite emphasis on the imagined pastoral moralities of hard work, perseverance, suffering, and sacrifice.[6]

Ethno-cultural groups have the strongest attachment to their homeland, as illustrated

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[5]Joseph Smith, "Articles of Faith," in *Mormonism in Canada: The History of the Movement into Canada. What it has done and What it is Doing for the West* (Calgary: Calgary Herald, 1905), 11.

[6]Frances Swyripa, *Wedded to the Cause: Ukrainian-Canadian Women and Ethnic Identity 1891-1991* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1993), 226-227.

by the artifacts and imagery found throughout the Danish Canadian National Museum and Gardens and the Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Museum. In both cases, the ethnicity assigned the pioneer is not as powerful as the ethnicity represented in other facets of the exhibits, although certain elements make their pioneer ethnic: for the Danes, the Lutheran Church and an emphasis on education; for the Chinese, occupation. But large areas are devoted to old-world culture and personalities from prehistory onward. Because it is important to include elements considered crucial to a representation of homeland culture, the two museums rely on replica, symbolism and models when genuine artifacts are unavailable. Both museums also consider it their mandate to interpret the role of their homeland culture in Canada, and assume the role of ambassador for that culture to other Canadians.

MAKING THE PIONEER ETHNIC

Unlike the generic pioneer narrative, where each group follows roughly the same pattern in expressing its Alberta heritage, ethnicity is communicated in the museum very differently. The first means by which ethnicity appears in the museum is through those elements that are compatible with the generic pioneer narrative, facilitating integration with the mainstream. Religion, which plays a strong role in the generic narrative, both through the character element of faith and the role churches play in civilizing the prairie, is perhaps the easiest way that the pioneer can blend the generic and the ethnic. Religion also has a considerable material culture associated with it, making it easily interpreted in the museum where there is a reliance on 'things' to relate a message. While five of the six ethnic groups being examined here came from Christian nations, they represented different denominations or sects: Roman- and Byzantine-rite Catholic, Lutheran, Mormon, Anglican, Methodist and

Presbyterian, each of which had a unique material tradition made more unique by ethnic difference. For instance, the differences between Catholicism in Bonnyville and Catholicism in Mundare extend beyond rite to be distinctly French Canadian and Ukrainian as well. The museum interpretation takes the generic element of religion in the mainstream narrative and infuses it with ethnic meaning through group specific traditions, such as festivals, and material artifacts. In this practice the Chinese demonstrate how certain elements affix more easily to the generic narrative than others. The main gallery of the Chinese museum displays objects of Chinese religious significance, but because Eastern religions do not fit easily into the generic pioneer mould, religion is much more muted in the *Our Chosen Land* gallery. Also, while Christian influences are interpreted through the Chinese mission in the latter, they appear as external influences and are not related to the Chinese's own activities or feelings. The statement, "local people did not support the idea of introducing Christianity to unassimilated Chinese," is the only comment about the mission outside of its function as a building and program centre.[7] In general, the exhibit makes no statement about the role Christianity, Confucianism, Buddhism or any other religion played in the historic or contemporary community. The Chinese cemetery, significant to traditional Chinese religious beliefs about an afterlife, is mentioned only in newspaper articles posted on a bulletin board on the way out of the gallery. As a result, while a present and ethnicizing element in the main galleries, religion is not an ethnic element in the *Our Chosen Land* gallery.

The second means by which the generic pioneer is made ethnic is through the visible or tangible elements of culture. While conventional wisdom holds that appearance does not

[7]"Chinatown Development," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Museum (CCCCM), Calgary, AB, visited 30 September 2002.

always equate depth, the look of the pioneer is perhaps the most potent way that ethnicity is assigned. Thus, ethnically specific clothing, household decorations, cookery, arts and crafts, and architecture are especially important, as are the pioneer's ethnic music, dance, humour, games and language. More prevalent among groups more recently arrived in North America and less likely to have acquired mainstream material possessions and practices, these elements came with the pioneers from the homeland or were created with skills and knowledge brought to the prairie and then taught and maintained over time. They may continue to be part of the ethnic group's living culture, or no longer maintained and identified with a particular time that has passed.

Even less bound in time is the third strategy used in the community museum to present ethnicity. While the first two means have some presence in an Alberta experience, even if only in the luggage and imaginations of those who brought them, symbols and myths signifying a cultural lineage from the homeland evoke membership in an international ethnic community. They are also often stereotypical. For example, what would a Danish museum be without Hans Christian Anderson or a Chinese museum without porcelain vases? Such figures and items can be stylized and presented through statues or replicas because their importance lies in the Danish folk or Chinese artistic tradition that they symbolize, not the provenance or authenticity of the items themselves. In that these elements represent a group's tendency to look to the homeland for cultural guidance or legitimacy, they are common in the ethno-cultural and the ethno-religious museum but generally absent from the ethno-geographic museum where the prairie locality drives the story.

REPRESENTING ETHNICITY IN THE COMMUNITY MUSEUM

The relationship in the ethnic community museum between the pioneer and ethnic elements that draw from the homeland rests on and reflects the strength of the homeland and the prairie in the community's consciousness and values. These considerations, in turn, determine how strong ethnic expression will be in the museum, which elements and means will be used to present it and how it will appear. In the ethno-cultural museum the homeland dominates; in the ethno-religious museum both prairie and homeland are important; and in the ethno-geographic museum the prairie overshadows anywhere else. As such, each museum's attitude toward and presentation of not only ethnicity but also a peculiar group experience, both historical and contemporary, differs.

Ethnicity at the Danish Canadian National Museum is most obvious through its conscious use of elements from the cultural heritage of Denmark. Because it is a national institution supported by the Federation of Danish Associations in Canada (the Danish Federation), the museum has selected as its primary focus not the locality of Dickson or Danish settlements in Alberta but the Canadian and international Danish communities to instill in Canadian Danes "a better understanding of our ancestral homeland and our country."[8] With this calling, Danish heritage at the Danish museum finds its definition in Denmark. Imagery, replica and text are used to represent the Vikings, the sea, Hans

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[8]"Statement of Philosophy," *Revised Terms of Reference: Feasibility Study for Danish-Canadian Museum for Dickson, Alberta* (N.p.: 1992). The Danish Federation maintains strong ties with Denmark and, in fact, has a number of member organizations in the country, even occasionally holding its annual conference there. It also works with research and archives groups in Denmark and liaises between Canada and Denmark on the occasion of royal visits from Denmark and on visa issues for Danish pastors. See Rolf Buschardt Christensen, *Federation of Danish Associations in Canada* (Gloucester: N.p., March 1997), 1-2, 9.

Christian Anderson and folk tales that harken to the homeland. For instance, there is the "Viking Trail" in the garden with its planned Viking ship and, in the dormitory stairwell, the *Kirkeskibe*, as an example of the model ships, that hang in Danish churches to symbolize both the "faith that brings man to rest" and "safety for the sea-faring man."[9] Hans Christian Anderson features prominently in the museum's programming, most noticeably in the Hans Christian Anderson story room where his books can be read and in the "Children's Garden of Imagination" where trails, beginning with his effigy in bronze, lead to the statue of his most famous fairy-tale character, the Little Mermaid. Much of the collection - including female and male Danish costumes, ceramics, lace and embroidered pieces, and furnishings - were brought by immigrants from Denmark and donated to the museum from across Canada.

Danish heritage and Canadian heritage mingle together throughout the grounds, but while often spatially combined, they remain segmented. The Danish flag abounds on the property, generally accompanied by the Canadian Maple Leaf. The miniature castle co-exists with the pioneer church and dormitory. In the gardens, native prairie plants grow alongside plants from Denmark, and the "Famous Danes Grove" profiles well-known Danes from Canada, Denmark and other lands where Danes settled.[10] On the other hand, the pioneer garden, featuring vegetables, fruits, herbs and spices grown by local settlers, flanks the pioneer walk where cement blocks hold small bronze plaques with the names of pioneer families (drawn from across Canada) honoured through a monetary donation by descendants

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[9]"Kirkeskibe," text panel, Danish Canadian National Museum (DCNM), Dickson, AB, visited 18 August 2002.

[10]Directors' briefing document with excerpts from "Lord's Final Report," a feasibility study commissioned by the Danish museum and prepared by Lord Cultural Resources Planning & Management Inc., circulated 1991-1992.

or friends. The Danish pioneers represented at the museum are not exclusively of the prairie but include settlers from across the country.

Much of the presentation of the Danish pioneer, in fact, suggests that there has been an element of rediscovery in terms of an ethnic figure. As western Europeans, the Danes were welcomed into Canada and saluted for their quickness to assimilate, a trait valued by many Danes themselves. Although Danish cultural traditions and the Danish language survived in Dickson well past the pioneer period, histories of Dickson chronicle their demise from local everyday life, the death knell sounding in 1955 when Danish was dropped from the services at Bethany Lutheran:

> In Dickson the language question had been a matter of concern for more than a generation. In time English became the dominant language. Not so in the church . . . the seat of power and authority in the community. A conflict ensued as English gained ascendency. Sufficient to say that in the early fifties, the Danish language lost caste, and thereafter all church services where held in the English language.[11]

The change was made, "for the future of the church, and for the sake of the young people,"[12] and in response to a movement to organize the community's boys and girls into clubs "whose emphasis is on the training of youth for good [Canadian] citizenship."[13] Such was the decline of Danish ethnicity on the prairies that researcher Frank M. Paulsen of the National Museum of Man concluded his 1972 study of their settlements with the proclamation: "It seems safe to predict that by the end of the century these colonies will have lost their Danish

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[11]C.M. Christiansen, "Dickson: The Dickson Story," *Grub -Axe to Grain* (Spruceview, Alberta: Spruceview School Area Historical Society, 1973), 33. Punctuation original.

[12]Margarethe Nissen, Esther Thesburg and Andy Kjearsgaard, "A History of Dickson, Alberta, Canada" in *Danish Emigration to Canada*, ed. Henning Bender and Birgit Flemming Larsen (Aalborg, Denmark: Danish Worldwide Archives, 1991), 76.

[13]Christiansen, 33.

identity completely."[14] In this light, it is remarkable that a national museum of Danish history and culture would open its doors in Dickson in 2002. What changed in the interim was the shift toward multiculturalism in Canada, which served to awaken among many cultural minorities a sense that they had contributed to the nation's development as groups not just individuals. "When the people of a given cultural background see their own history as significant for the whole country," a committee of the Danish Federation stated in 1992,

> then they must seek the means of presenting the facts. The goal . . . is to present the story of how the Danish immigrants contributed to and assimilated within the Canadian mosaic. This will be achieved by establishing a permanent museum in Dickson, Alberta.[15]

The telling of the Danish pioneer story that followed was an exercise in coaxing out those ethnic traditions and memories that were lurking in the recesses of the community's memory, and with the help of a national body, which had the benefit of a more often revitalized and active ethnic identity, a heritage that could have easily been lost was rediscovered.

Even to the end of the twentieth century, however, a Danish heritage remained part of Dickson's religious identity and it is thus here that the ethnic pioneer is most authentic. The church replica, Dagmar Pioneer Church, continues the practice of juxtaposing the pioneer with a homeland cultural heritage, including in its architecture, but it also serves to represent an institution that served a similar purpose in the pioneer era.[16] At its dedication service Pastor Holger Madsen spoke of the church as a replica of the dreams, often

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[14]Frank M. Paulsen, *Danish Settlements on the Canadian Prairies: Folk Traditions, Immigrant Experiences, and Local History* (Ottawa: National Museums of Canada, 1974), 83.

[15]"Information Needs," in *Revised Terms of Reference.*

[16]The church was intended to have a stepped-sloped roof typical of Danish churches but in the design and construction this intention was lost. The church does have other elements of Danish religious architecture such as white stucco walls, arched windows and doorways, and a red tiled roof. Jean Weltz, interview by author, Dickson, AB, 18 August 2002.

unrealized, of the Danish pioneers for a house of worship.[17] The symbolism in the church melds an ethnic pioneer experience, of immigration and displacement and a longing for a home church community, with a traditional Danish folk tradition of Queen Dagmar whose own story involves a displacement from her homeland.[18] The Bohemian-born wife of Denmark's eleventh-century King Vladimir, who died giving birth to her first child, a girl, Queen Dagmar is credited with strengthening Christianity in Denmark. It is a Danish tradition to remember her by giving a Dagmar cross, bearing the faces of Christ and the four apostles - in the likeness of the cross that was found buried with her in the nineteenth century when her grave was exhumed - to girls on their christening or confirmations. One of these crosses, worn by "Kristen," who immigrated to Dickson as a young girl, is displayed in the *Immigrant Room*.[19]

The church's stained glass windows also combine elements of prairie and Alberta symbolism with Christian and Danish symbols. The "Sunny Alberta" window depicts the sun, a mountain, river, field of wheat and plow. Next to it an Alberta wild rose sits over a pond containing two swans, a lily pad and fish, flanked by the Canadian and Danish flags. On the opposite wall one window features a dove and olive branch, cross and rainbow; the other has a lyre, Viking ship, Viking helmet, and prehistoric runesten grave marker. Combined with the Madonna and Child behind the altar, these symbols make for an eclectic but strong statement about the fusion between an old and a new world and Christian faith.

The schools is also an anchor for Danish input into the generic pioneer narrative

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[17]Holger Madsen, speaking at the Dagmar Lutheran Church Dedication Service, DCNM, Dickson, AB, 26 May 2002.

[18]"Dagmar Pioneer Church," Brochure, DCNM, Dickson, AB.

[19]Artifact label, *Immigrant Room*, DCNM.

through the community's emphasis on education. Local histories of Dickson stress education as a principle cherished by the Danish people, reflected not only in the fact that Demark has had compulsory primary education since 1814, but also in the fact that one of Alberta's first rural high schools was established in Dickson. This ideal is presented in the museum, not surprisingly, most strongly in the museum building, itself the former girl's high school dormitory. The first school district, organized in 1906 shortly after the pioneers arrived, was named "Kingo" in honour of a well-known Danish poet but the Department of Education mistakenly transcribed it as "Kings."[20] The opening of the high school in the midst of the Depression was a clerical initiative in response to the growing number of youth of high school age in the area, including many young men from Denmark.[21] After five years in the church basement, the school became too much for the congregation to support financially and custody was turned over to the province. The subsequent grant paid for the construction of a new school building, said by Lillian Riste, a local resident, to be "a real credit to a Danish set. [sic] who kept high ideals and a mania for Education."[22] The Danes also established a number of folk schools in Alberta, modelled after those in Denmark used to build cultural identity and national pride after a military loss to Germany in 1864, offering programs from one to forty weeks that taught the English language and Danish customs.[23] The museum's plans call for folk school and high school traditions to be a significant part of the

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[20]Christiansen, 35.

[21]Lillian Riste, "Dickson, Danish Settlement" (Innisfail, AB: n.p., 1940 ca), 33, see Alberta Folklore and Local History Collection, ACC # 96-93-574, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB, http://folklore.
library.ualberta.ca/dspCitation.cfm?ID=174 (accessed 27 February 2003).

[22]Ibid.

[23]Christensen, 107.

interpretation but as of yet nothing has been expanded on beyond what is in the dormitory building.[24]

The Danish pioneer is also visually present in the museum through the occasional appearance of costumed volunteers and in the depiction of a traditionally costumed woman and young girl gardening in the mural on the dormitory's outside wall. Also, Danish lace and embroidery are hang in frames throughout the building. Danish food is said to define a Danish household and this assumption is reflected through the dormitory coffee house menu of Danish pastries and desserts. In particular, *Æbelskiver* (dumplings served with fruit or jam), are served in the coffee house, an *Æbelskiver* pan is displayed in the *History and Artifacts Room* and both recipe books and pans are sold in the gift shop. One of the major summer festivals at the museum is Æbelskiver Days in July. Lastly, the gardens themselves are valued by the Danes as a mark of Danish ethnicity and a symbol of a love for horticulture that they transplanted to the prairie.

The Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre and its museum act in much the same way as the Danish museum and gardens, although the homeland is perhaps even more favoured. The Chinese also found a catalyst for their ethnic consciousness in multiculturalism, and the movement to establish the cultural centre emerged along a slightly earlier but similar time-line to the Danish museum. Multiculturalism, however, effected something different in the Chinese community. The Chinese were on the opposite end of the spectrum that marked the desirability of particular ethnic groups as immigrants and citizens,[25] and rather than

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[24] *Revised Terms of Reference.*

[25] John Porter, *The Vertical Mosaic: An Analysis of Social Class and Power in Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1965), 62-65.

disappearing into the mainstream as the Danes did, the Chinese were deliberately kept out. The result was a closed, internally focussed community that maintained its cultural distinctiveness and separateness until new immigration and multiculturalism in the last quarter of the twentieth-century prompted great change. Speaking on the occasion of the Centre's tenth anniversary in 2002, President Victor Mah stated:

> We felt deeply that we had to fully integrate into the mainstream society and abolish the traditional out-dated idea of being an isolated community . . . Through the construction of the Cultural Centre, we also hope to actively promote Chinese culture, foster cultural exchange between the East and West, and contribute meaningfully to the Canadian spirit of multiculturalism.[26]

This desire to assert that Chinese culture deserves a place in the mainstream is evident throughout the museum. The *Our Chosen Land* gallery is such an assertion, created to honour Calgary's centennial in 1994 and dedicated to the Chinese immigrants who settled in the city more than a century earlier. But the museum's primary theme is the technological, artistic and scientific contributions of the Chinese people to the world. It is in the context of a five-thousand-year tradition of civilization that the Chinese culture is depicted and its contribution to the Canadian mosaic, in spite of historical exclusion, is legitimized:

> The Chinese Cultural Centre, in dedicating itself to promoting Chinese cultural [sic] and cultural exchange, is attempting to enrich the lives of all members of our society by exposing them to ideas and customs that others find so captivating. There has to be something intrinsically valuable and appealing, otherwise they would not have survived. Encouraging all members of our society to articulate their values and ideas, and show to others the best their culture and heritage have to offer is the best expression of the ultimate value of multiculturalism.[27]

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[26]Victor Mah, "In Retrospect and Looking Forward," *Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre 10th Anniversary Publication* (Calgary: Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre, 2002), 5.

[27]Malcolm Chow, "The Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre - Where It's From and Where It's Going," *Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre Special Inauguration Publication* (Calgary: Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre, 1992), 25.

Ethnicity at the Chinese museum is represented with the intention to establish a rich and elite cultural tradition. Chinese ethnicity is not expressed as folk culture as in the Danish museum but through the high culture of imperial luxury, science and art. In addition to replicas of mahogany and marble court furniture and emperors' and empresses' robes, boots, flower-vase shoes, and headpieces, the Xian Terra Cotta Warriors are the gallery's centrepiece, testament to the "might and power of the imperial system."[28] The gallery advances a message of accomplishment that builds as the visitor is led past objects and text that interpret the imperial court, the scientific and technological "contributions of Chinese civilization;" and the porcelain pieces and bronze figures and vessels.[29] All this stands as assembled evidence of a legacy of success and achievement corroborated by a time-line along the back wall that, through juxtaposition with other world cultures, establishes the Chinese people as a great world civilization. This time-line leads the visitor to the *Our Chosen Land* gallery were the ethnic pioneer is found.

In *Our Chosen Land* the homeland connection is shown using a number of artifacts as examples of Chinese culture and to corroborate the generic compatible elements of their pioneer story. The interpretation of the Chinese pioneer begins with the trip from China and the circumstances that led to it, immediately establishing the homeland as the beginning of the pioneer story through a map of the province of Guangdong and a description of the internal factors that pushed Chinese overseas.[30] To illustrate the journey from China the first artifacts the visitor sees are a trunk brought to Canada in 1890 with women's, men's and

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[28]Mah, 40.

[29]Artifact label, CCCCM.

[30]Only the Basilian Fathers Museum joins the Chinese Museum in this respect.

children's clothing, shoes and a fan. Other examples of immigrant or pioneer material culture include game pieces and an instruction book for Mah Jongg and a record player with a Cantonese opera record. More specifically, a set of "Cutting Tools" and soya sauce jug used by five generations of the Ng family and brought to Canada for use in a restaurant evoke both a tangible marker of Chinese ethnicity, in Chinese cuisine, and the major defining characteristic of the Chinese pioneer, his work.[31] Chinese language is used throughout and appears with English on most of the signs.

The ethnic nature of the emergent Chinese pioneer is characterized by his work, his state of bachelorhood and his mostly urban location. These men "found jobs on nearby cattle ranches, worked as cooks, houseboys or opened up their own businesses, especially laundries."[32] These occupations, in particular launderers, are represented with artifacts, text and photographs. The hard work and resourcefulness in the "menial jobs" available to the Chinese, as well as the role of the Tongs or family clan-based mutual aid societies, are a point of pride in the Chinese pioneer identity.[33] That until the Depression "not one Chinese-Canadian in Calgary had received charity or been a public charge" is obviously important.[34] The Chinatown environment that allowed Chinese identity to be built on an ability to adapt and survive in hostile circumstances is interpreted through text and photographs that portray its physical evolution, its businesses and its growth as an urban community.

While the Chinese pioneer experience was clearly different from that of the other

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[31]Artifact label, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

[32]"Development of Calgary's Chinatowns, Calgary Pioneers from the Orient," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

[33]"Employment and Occupations," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

[34]"Formation and Clans of Family Organization," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

groups in this study, and presented as such, the focus on hard work and community development allow the Chinese to make their specific story compatible with the generic narrative, thereby claiming a place in the building of a larger Alberta community. The differences created by a discriminatory social and political system are not lost, however, and, in fact, the *Our Chosen Land* gallery is organized around four stages of Chinese immigration and discrimination: "1885 - 1923: (The Chinese Immigration Act and the Head Tax)," "1923 - 1946: (The Era of Exclusion - the Dark Age in the History of Chinese Immigration to Canada)," "1947 - 1967: (Repeal of Chinese Exclusion Act)," and "1967 - Present: (Current Contemporary Immigration)."[35] The Chinese experience in Canada itself ends with the contemporary Chinese community and particularly Hong Kong immigrants from the 1970s on who "unlike the Chinese pioneers . . . were admitted according to their educational background, occupational skill, knowledge of English and personal qualities."[36] Often wealthy entrepreneurs and professionals, these immigrants are interpreted for their contribution to the late twentieth-century Calgary and Canadian economies. For example, the 1987 takeover of Calgary-based Husky Oil Ltd. by Hong Kong billionaire Li Ka Shing shows how Chinese-Canadian investment "helped Canadian industries get back on their feet."[37]

The closing interpretation in the exhibit reflects on the Chinese community's first one hundred years in Calgary. Their story "just like Chinese everywhere in Canada, is mostly a story of racial oppression, denial of civil rights and many years of systematic discrimination

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[35]Text panels, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

[36]"Immigrants from Hong Kong," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

[37]Ibid.

created by the host community and a succession of governments at all levels for most of the century."[38] This statement explains why the Chinese interpretation is not left at the settlement era like most other pioneer stories, where the impression of an idyllic past is left in the visitor's imagination despite the interpretation of hardship and sacrifice. For the Chinese there are no lingering ideas about a pastoral utopia to colour the memory of their pioneer experience. Instead, they see a gradual improvement in social status and living conditions beginning with the Second World War and the end of the pioneer era. Further, ethno-cultural museums, even those that deal with unpleasant or unjust experiences, for better or for worse, often include a very strong element of celebration. But the racism permeating the Chinese-Canadian story was by far its strongest at the time of settlement, leaving much less in that period to celebrate.[39] Celebration, therefore, for the most part, is left to the main gallery where the elite cultural and scientific legacy of Chinese civilization excludes any discussion of social inequalities, poverty or hardship. In the *Our Chosen Land* gallery, in order to place a positive ending on the Chinese pioneer story it is necessary to focus, as they do, on the "sacrifice, perseverance and hard work" of the pioneer and to bring the story through time to a period where the experience of the Chinese, if not perfect, is far more positive.[40]

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[38]"Closing Statement," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

[39]More current discriminatory events interpreted in the museum are the reaction of West Vancouver residents to the "glamour" and "opulence" of the homes of Hong Kong immigrants in the area; the reaction of Scarborough residents to the increasing Chinese population, blaming it for traffic and parking problems; and the 1979 CTV *W5* program that depicted Chinese "foreigners" taking university places from white "Canadian" students but the Chinese "foreigners" depicted in the show were Canadian citizens. This incident became a popular rallying point against racism for Asian Canadians and resulted in the creation of ad-hoc committees and demonstrations in many Canadian cities. It now has a prominent place in Chinese-Canadian collective memory and literature about the modern struggle against racism. See "1967-Present: (Current Contemporary Period)," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

[40]"Closing Statement," text panel, *Our Chosen Land*, CCCCM.

Alberta's Ukrainian settlers also experienced only gradual integration into the mainstream but the discrimination and prejudice they faced does not drive the Basilian Fathers Museum's interpretation. In fact, for the most part, it is only alluded to through occasional references such as "hard-won acceptance," or of attempts by Clifford Sifton's successors to "curtail immigration."[41] Instead, Ukrainian ethnicity is expressed through an attachment to the land and peasant farming ideals and through the distinctive material culture associated with that identity. The representation of material culture, in turn, focusses on two themes: folk traditions associated with working on the land; and the rituals and traditions of the Ukrainian Catholic Church, again generally tied to the land. The Ukrainian clothing and textiles on display are examples of these themes. The fabrics themselves were woven in the old-world villages of peasant farmers or on the prairies in the tradition learned in the homeland, either way by making use of resources in the natural environment.[42] The colours and patterns (such as earthy tones, flower motifs, natural dyes) also reflect the peasants affinity with the environment although much in the symbolism of the embroidery and weave has religious significance as well.[43] Artifacts significant to Ukrainians' religious tradition, church leadership and land-based folk culture appear throughout the permanent galleries. They include a display of tools and work done by Philip Pawluk whose church furnishings and decorations, including several ornate iconostases (icon screens) adorned approximately fifty-five prairie churches by the end of his career.[44] *The Basilian Fathers and Their People*

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[41]"Prologue" and "Canada the Promised Land," text panels, *A New Home in the West,* Basilian Fathers Museum, Mundare, AB, visited 17 September 2002.

[42]See Radomir Bilash and Barbara Wilberg, *Tkanyana: An Exhibit of Ukrainian Weaving* (Edmonton: Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies and Friends of the Ukrainian Village Society, 1988), 6.

[43]Nadia Cyncar, interview by author, Edmonton, AB, 10 January 2003.

[44]Text panel, Basilian Fathers Museum.

gallery, especially in the church festival portion of the interpretation, clearly demonstrates the mingling of the land with folk tradition and the religious calendar. Wheat as a symbol of good health and bountiful harvest features in both Christmas and New Years' celebrations, while pussy willows on Palm Sunday and decorated eggs on Easter itself also draws on associations with nature and the land.

The material culture of the Ukrainian Catholic worship service and the artifacts and interpretation surrounding the Basilians and the Sister Servants of Mary Immaculate also serve as an ethnicizing element for the Ukrainian pioneer. The Basilians and the Sister Servants participated themselves in the pioneer narrative by erecting shelters; breaking the land and harvesting their own crops; building churches, schools, hospitals and orphanages; and paying taxes, all interpreted in the museum.[45] These themes also attach very easily to the generic pioneer narrative which is why the Ukrainian ethnic pioneer is more difficult to separate from the generic than is the case for ethno-cultural museums. Ethnic tradition almost exclusively originates in the homeland but because the peasant farmer and the pioneer share a preoccupation with the land, a large portion of that identity transfers smoothly to the prairie.

The Basilian Fathers Museum does display items that are homeland specific but most of them are related to Ukrainian church history and do not seem out of place in the museum as they serve to support interpretations that deal specifically with the Basilians or the Church. They include text panels and artwork used to interpret St. Basil the Great (who founded the Basilians in 329), the artifacts accompanying "The Baptism of the Ukraine" that deal with

[45]Demonstrated in photographs, artifacts and text, including the Fathers' tax receipt, Basilian Fathers Museum.

the introduction of Christianity to Ukraine through Princess Olha and her grandson Prince Volodymyr in 988; a silk banner painted with St. Michael Archangel, patron saint of Kyiv; a first printed edition Slavonic-language Bible from 1580; and two Slavonic prayer books from 1628 and the eighteenth century.[46] Two secular aspects of the Ukrainian homeland identity are interpreted in a separate space in the hallway leading to *The Basilian Fathers and Their People* gallery. On one side a cabinet contains a bust and photograph of Taras Shevchenko, Ukraine's national poet, along with one of his books and soil from his grave in Ukraine. On the opposite wall hang two maps showing Ukrainian lands in 1651 and 1951, explained by the museum's interpreters in the context of Ukrainians' centuries long struggle to be recognized as a nation. These two items represent a Ukrainian national consciousness that is an important part of the Ukrainian-Canadian identity not tied to the period of settlement and with little relevance to the pioneer experience.[47]

In the Court House Museum and the C.O. Card Home in Cardston the Mormon ethnic pioneer appears in a way similar to its Ukrainian counterpart in Mundare but the homeland looms much larger as an earlier stage in a reoccurring pioneer experience. A very strong part of the Mormon identity is the "Great Trek" to the American West and the pioneer experience it encompassed, beginning shortly after Joseph Smith founded the Mormon church in New York state in the 1830s, as the Mormons sought to keep ahead of established society and the persecution that it often brought. It was the children of those pioneers who came to southern Alberta, North America's last frontier, fleeing prosecution for polygamy. That the Mormon homeland experience shared a tradition similar to the pioneer experience on the Canadian

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[46]*The Basilians and Their People*, Basilian Fathers Museum.

[47]"Basilian Fathers Museum Guided Tour Booklet," Basilian Fathers Museum, Mundare, AB, n.d., 5.

prairie has encouraged both a melding of the homeland and generic pioneer mythologies, and lesser reliance on exclusively homeland imagery to tell their story. Nonetheless, in the same way as in the other museums, what makes the Mormon pioneer ethnic are the items and traditions brought from the homeland in Utah. Elements compatible with the generic narrative are strongest ,and religion is the primary way in which the Mormon pioneer is made ethnic. Unlike the other museums, however, the Cardston museums display fewer religious artifacts - in part because the religious material culture of the Church of the Latter-day Saints is often part of sacred church ceremony and not necessarily public. Instead, the influence of the church is present most strongly in social organization and the emphasis on and structure of the family.

Mormon-founded communities, including Cardston, are spatially organized on the plan devised by Joseph Smith to centre on church buildings with residents' homes, barns and gardens close together and farm land located in outlying areas. The museums reflect this in their focus on town life and the organizational structures of the community such as the Choral Society, Orchestra, Daughters of the Utah Pioneers, Sunday School classes and sports teams. Team photographs from any number of sports, but especially basketball and baseball, thickly line the hallways in the downstairs portion of the Court House Museum. Together with trophies and a baseball uniform, they represent both an American tradition, and more importantly, an emphasis on sports that is common in Mormon communities. The Mormon family is represented in the museum through the profile of founding family patriarchs and matriarchs, especially Charles Ora Card, "Aunt Zina" Card and the other family heads who accompanied them to Cardston. These men and women appear in photographs throughout

both museums, in the biographies of the Cards and Edward James Wood displayed on the celebrity text panels in the Court House basement, in biography books in the Card Home, and in the display of household items that belonged to them. Also, the practice of polygamy is hinted at in the Court House Museum through the display of a cushion top "handmade in 1888 by [the] donor's Grandfather, William Carter, during his six month imprisonment for practising polygamy. To keep himself busy he made one of these for each of his daughters."[48] It also appears in the Card Home through photographs of Card with his wives and children, a history of the lives of "the [four] wives of Charles Ora Card," and a portrait of Thomas Rowell Leavitt with the names of his three wives and his children listed on the label.

Originating in North America, the Mormon pioneer has little secular material culture that is distinctive. One of very few homeland artifacts to represent a unique Utah heritage is a handmade miniature wood carving of the Golden Seagull Statue that stands in Temple Square in Salt Lake City. Utah remains prominent in the interpretation but in ways that are tied to the Alberta pioneers. For instance, many of the artifacts on display are labelled with "brought from Utah by . . .," followed by the name of a pioneer man or woman.[49] These artifacts are significant because of where they have come from, a point made strongly in the Card Home where a clock and Card's rocking chair bearing labels "brought from Utah by covered wagon" sit near a dresser with the sign, "this chest of drawers came from the home of Brigham Young in Salt Lake City."[50] The importance attached to artifacts connected to the homeland is part of a Mormon and Ukrainian reliance on the homeland for cultural

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[48]Artifact label, Court House Museum, Cardston, AB, visited 2 September 2002; and Artifacts and artifact labels, C.O. Card Home, Cardston, AB, visited 2 September 2002.

[49]Artifact labels, Court House Museum.

[50]Artifact labels, C.O. Card Home.

definition and it is a primary difference between their immigrant pioneers and Anglo and French migrant pioneers. While the latter certainly brought traditions and objects with them, their pioneer a pre-migration consciousness of "where we came from" that to the Ukrainian and Mormon pioneers is as important to their story as where they settled.

At Bonnyville and High River, the principal answer to the "where" question is the prairie. There is sometimes mention of where particular French or Anglo families and individuals migrated from but their story in the museum does not begin in earnest until arrival in the West. For the previous four groups the story begins in the homeland, moves with the immigrants and is continued on the prairie but for the French and Anglo pioneers the story begins on the prairie and the pioneers join it as they move to the West. This mind-set reflects the dominance of the generic narrative in ethno-geographic museums where the beginning of the story is the wilderness which the pioneer then enters. In both the Museum of the Highwood and the Bonnyville museum the permanent interpretation, very lineal and chronological, originates on the prairie with a brief treatment of the pre-settlement era. The permanent panels in the Bonnyville museum begin with Angus Shaw and the North West Company and Peter Pond and the Hudson's Bay Company before leading into the Oblate missionaries and the start of settlement. In the Museum of the Highwood the dioramas move from the Blackfoot into "Farming."

It is significant that these two museums are the only ones in this study that deal with the First Nations as part of the community's story in any substantive way. In the Museum of the Highwood, in addition to the diorama there are several drawers filled with Aboriginal artifacts. Most years, the Bonnyville museum has a teepee erected on the grounds and

Aboriginal and Métis religion and spirituality formed part of the interpretation in the *Family and Faith* exhibit.[51] Bonnyville also occasionally hosts First Nations festivals and programming, commendably avoiding a tendency of Alberta community museums to abandon the First Nations story at the point the settlers arrive. The Court House Museum, also representing a North American group, has two cabinets containing Aboriginal artifacts but they are presented as an adjunct to the Mormon story rather than its beginning. With the exception of the dress taken for collateral in a local store, a copy of Treaty Seven and photographs of Blood Chiefs on the wall, the significance of the artifacts to the Cardston area is not stated and their provenance is identified solely through the names of their apparently white donors. Although the town of Cardston shares a border with the Blood Reserve, many of the "Indian" artifacts displayed originate with Aboriginal groups from across the country. For the Mormons, despite the importance of the First Nations people to their story - LDS theology teaches that after the ascension, Christ went to the Americas to prophesy to the Native inhabitants - its antecedent remains Utah and the local First Nations population is only roughly represented. None of the Danish, Chinese and Ukrainian museums interpret the First Nations people who live in their area.[52]

Without an emphasis on homeland in the Bonnyville and High River museums, material evidence of the homeland is scarce or absent from their interpretation. They neither emphasize ethnic perceptual elements, except in the use of the French language, nor present homeland specific artifacts and symbols. In the case of High River, there is only the royal

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[51]The teepee had not been erected in the summer of 2002.

[52]The Danish museum displays two paintings of "American Indians" by a well-known Danish artist, Gerda Christoffersen, in a back hallway.

paraphernalia already mentioned. Instead, the ethnicity of the French and the Anglo pioneers emerges, nearly exclusively, through those elements that are compatible with the generic narrative that represent attempts to duplicate societies they knew in the East. Anglo-Canadian settlers attempted to establish a prairie Ontario and, like immigrants from Britain, sought to build on a foundation of British political, legal and social structures.[53] French settlers came West at the behest of Roman Catholic missionaries unprepared to confine an idea of French Canada to the borders of Quebec.[54] Nevertheless, ties to the East for both groups, but especially for the Anglo-Canadians, have been lost in the popular history presented in their museums. Western regionalism became the strongest force in the mainstream pioneer mythology and overshadowed these historical connections. The links to Ontario (or Britain) and Quebec that are present are incidental and few, compared to other groups in the study, and the connections tend to be expressed in terms of individuals with no attempt to establish a group origin in some other place.[55]

The French deviate from this pattern somewhat, both because they are not the dominant group in Alberta's mainstream, and because federal government programs and alliances with French associations (such as the Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta) have helped communities like Bonnyville to nurture their French language and

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[53]Doug Owram, *The Promise of Eden: The Canadian Expansionist Movement and the Idea of the West, 1856 - 1900* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 134.

[54]Painchaud, 450-451.

[55]See, for example, "Dr Séverin Sabourin," and "Hommages aux Pionniers Omer Croteau et Anne-Marie Mercier," text panels, Bonnyville and District Museum, Bonnyville, AB, visited 28 August 2002.

culture.[56] In Bonnyville what makes the pioneer French is the same thing that made French Canadians in Quebec and across Canada French, namely the Roman Catholic Church and the French language. Slightly more evidence of specifically ethnic culture, primarily through Catholic church artifacts and the high profile of the French language is the result. The museum's textual interpretive elements, signage, Web site, publications, and tourism and marketing literature appear in both French and English. A unique addition to the museum's representation of the French pioneer experience is the folk art of Clementine Poitras, whose miniature papier-maché figures portray French-Canadian pioneers in scenes that show the French as "energetic and happy, a people who valued friendship and conversation."[57]

While the French Albertan settler story begins on the prairie with the First Nations, fur traders and missionaries, the Roman Catholic orders are conscious of origins elsewhere (for example, the Sisters of the Cross, founded in Le Mans, France) or, as is the case of the Oblates, ties to Quebec. The Roman Catholic Church is the strongest French element in the Bonnyville and District Museum and because of the attention paid to the histories of the Sisters of the Cross, the *Seours de Evron*, the Sisters of the Assumption and the Oblates, plus their appearance in multiple locations as part of the institutional histories of the hospitals, schools and churches. It is also significant that the few artifacts that jar with the Alberta

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[56]Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta is devoted to representing the French population in Alberta, promoting the cultural and social well-being of the French community, and encouraging and developing French symbols and the use and appreciation of the French language. See Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta, "Objectifs," *Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta*, www.francalta.ab.ca/acfa/provincial/acfa/objectif.htm (accessed 16 August 2003); and Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta: Regionale de Bonnyville-Cold Lake, "Regionale de Bonnyville-Cold Lake," *Association Canadienne-Française de l'Alberta*, www.francalta.ab.ca/acfa/bonnyvil/Default.htm (accessed 16 August 2003).

[57]"French Canadian Pioneers Re-created in Miniature," text panel, Bonnyville and District Museum.

place and the pioneer time period are the panel and photographs of the Croteau family's trip to Father Bonny's grotto in Montana and the Papal flag that hangs in the first Roman Catholic church replica. Both tie to a larger Catholic identity.

It is also of note that a Protestant French identity is also interpreted in the museum through the Duclos Mission, founded when the Reverend Duclos was called to the Bonnyville area by Francophone Presbyterian families. The Presbyterian churches established by Duclos began as bilingual congregations but many, including the Ardmore United Church on the museum grounds, became unilingual English by the 1930s.[58] Lastly, the French ethnic community, by establishing kinship and lineage, is reinforced by the naming of the area's founding families on three separate occasions: on the outside front arch, on the pioneer memorial plaque in the hallway leading outside to the grounds and on the "Colonisation - Bonnyville - Colonization" text panels in the main gallery.[59] The genealogy classes and services at the museum also work toward this end by providing the means by which local residents can research and/or confirm their French roots and family connections to the community.

The Museum of the Highwood is much more problematic to discuss in terms of ethnicity, not because there is no evidence of a British/Anglo-Canadian consciousness but rather because that identity is the one presented in the generic pioneer narrative. Anglo-Canadian migrants and British immigrants, as the dominant majority, generally did not settle in groups, and, when they present the history of their community, it is the history of a

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[58]"Duclos Mission," text panel, Bonnyville and District Museum.

[59]"Colonisation - Bonnyville - Colonization," text panels, Bonnyville and District Museum.

geographic place not a people.[60] The emphasis on the prairie locality and "our western Heritage" has meant that even though the society established in High River can trace its roots to the values and structures held commonly by loyalists of the British empire, its origins are given little credit.[61] In the same way as Bonnyville, the story begins in High River and individuals join it as they arrive. The text panels that accompany the dioramas mention fifteen individuals but where they originate is not said. The focus on the prairie also means that those elements falling outside the pioneer period are not symbols or stories from other places, but components of the geographic community's history that serve to situate it within and articulate the area's chronology more completely. Hence, the story extends from the Blackfoot First Nation through the pioneer period to the "Oilfields," with numerous thematic exhibits that either follow a particular topic through time (*Hairs to You*) or deal with very recent local history (*Hollywood North?*).

The union of the Anglo pioneer with the mainstream means that perceptual elements are mostly missing, although a Union Jack adorns the Queen's Jubilee display cabinet; one of the town's historic murals features *Sunday Afternoon at the Polo Match*, depicting the British sport as it was played on ranches in the High River area; and the text panel accompanying the "Blackie" diorama explains that the community was named for "Scottish professor, John Stuart Blackie."[62] These few exceptions blend into a pioneer that looks western Canadian. The lack of ethnicity characterizing the Anglo pioneer is a direct result of the lack of a clear

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[60]There are some Anglo group settlements in Alberta, the Barr Colony at Lloydminster, for example, and other settlers would have arrived in small groups or sought to settle near old neighbours and family, but, for the most part, they came and settled as individuals.

[61]"Ranching," text panel, Museum of the Highwood, High River, AB, visited 31 August 2002.

[62]"Blackie," text panel, Museum of the Highwood.

homeland mythology to accompany the generic narrative. The High River pioneers lack the duality that the others in this study have and therefore the feel of an ethnic story, even though their history is dominated by a particular ethnic group and pioneer experience.

The interpretation of ethnic experience in these museums is where difference in their Alberta stories can be seen. The relationship each group had with mainstream Alberta society, the prairie and their homeland causes their pioneer story to take on a specific nature. The museum's interpretation of the prairie and the homeland is telling of the value each holds in the ethno-geographic, ethno-religious and ethno-cultural community but also of the contemporary and historical experience of the group in Alberta. While the generic narrative does not drive the interpretation of ethnicity in these museums, it still influences it, providing a framework that makes certain elements of an ethnic story easier to tell than others. Nonetheless, the generic narrative is broad enough that ethnic groups who want to tell a specific story find ways to blend in their homeland heritage.

CONCLUSION: ON SIMILARITY, DIVERSITY AND THE COMMUNITY MUSEUM

The province of Alberta boasts a diverse population and a varied and complex history. The area's human history is many thousands of years old and its recent history full of change, controversy and contradiction. But despite a wealth of material, the province's community museums are overwhelmingly occupied with the story of the pioneer. Perhaps this is no surprise, as it is the tradition upon which most present-day communities were established. But even in relating this relatively small period of time, at the most generous accounting for no more than seventy-five years, the diversity that could be represented regarding the settlement experience seldom is.[1] Even in communities where the material culture in the museum is more or less the same from town to town, the local experiences, environments and personalities are distinctive. Some museums make considerable effort to relate this uniqueness but many more have allowed the unique and specific nature of their community to pass with the memories of now departed generations. In their place exists a canned pioneer presentation that lacks the capacity to communicate their particular heritage to new audiences. Further, the interpretation may also fail to acknowledge a whole series of issues reflecting other aspects of the prairie experience, past and present. The province's regional, economic, political, social, generational, occupational, sexual, spiritual, cultural, gender and urban and rural diversity, for example, is seldom explored. Social historians,

[1]If considering the settlement period as beginning with the ranching frontier very modestly in the 1870s and ending with the close of the Second World War.

popular and academic, have made strides to communicate many of these stories in print, but, on the whole, museums have been much slower to do so. As Alberta's population continues to change, becoming overwhelmingly urban and concentrated in the Edmonton-Calgary corridor, with an ever increasing proportion having arrived after the Second World War and the end of the pioneer period, a provincial history so dominated by an experience in which many have not shared will become more and more inadequate.[2]

It has been argued, especially in the context of dealing with Canadian identities, that focussing on diversity results in segmentation and trivialization, doing a disservice to the collective understanding of history.[3] More so, however, does a reliance on overarching narratives that risk becoming so standardized that they lose any real historical value. Representing what is shared is an important part of maintaining and building community identity, be it local, ethnic, provincial, national or otherwise. It is important not only to the stability and cohesiveness of that community but also to the personal sense of belonging of its members. This must occur in a genuine way, however, so that the society's members can find a place for their unique story in the broader community history, not by perpetuating cookie cutter histories. The solution is not for Alberta's community museums to stop representing the pioneer story, but instead for museums to refuse to be confined by a particular way of telling that story. They must allow it to evolve, change and take its place among the other stories that make up the communities, past and present, that they aim to reflect. Each of the museums in this study tells a unique story, many are actively engaged

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[2]See Statistics Canada, "A Profile of the Canadian Population, Where We Live," *2001 Census Analysis Series,* http://geodepot.statcan.ca/Diss/Highlights/Highlights_e.cfm (accessed 16 November 2003).

[3]See J. L. Granatstein, *Who Killed Canadian History?* (Toronto: Harper Collins Publishers, 1998).

with their communities, and all are interesting and special places to visit. But even considering the variations in their interpretative content and techniques, similarities in their narratives still limit their ability to fully express the differences in their communities.

The dominance of the generic pioneer narrative has muted the ethnic pioneer experience depicted in Alberta's community museums. Rather than portraying a peculiarly ethnic experience, the generic narrative provides the background for distinctive but sometimes superficial traits. Specific traditions interpreted in the museum are often authentic expressions of an ethnic identity but they remain confined by a particular framework and other authentic elements are not expressed. While the pioneer dresses in traditional folk costume, cooks traditional foods, uses traditional tools, and attends a traditional church, in interacting with the land and narrating the settlement story, the impact of the overarching Anglo-Canadian social, economic and political structure is paramount. Part of the explanation for this lies in the fact that this context reflects the dominant forces that shaped Alberta at the time of settlement and continue to influence its development, and that were shared by each of the pioneer groups. What is lost, however, by relying so heavily on those shared elements is historic difference. Moreover, differences in the experience of groups excluded from the mainstream, such as the Ukrainians and Chinese, are expressed from the perspective of their relationship with Anglo-Canadian society rather than by emphasizing the unique nature of those communities. Significant differences in how a community was established, for example, remain largely unarticulated as the focus turns to the establishment of businesses and industries, the role of social clubs and religious institutions and farming. The teleology that emerges is the generic narrative of progress

within a British political system, a capitalist, resource-based economy, and a Protestant work ethic and family. This narrative inadequately describes the ethnic experience and traditions of most of Alberta's pioneer groups.

The generic narrative not only dominates the telling of the group's prairie story, but it also dictates the context within which ethnicity can be presented. There are only particular components of the generic narrative where an ethnic ethos and tradition can attach. Experiences or values that do not fit this context are lost or are presented separately from the pioneer, and their significance to Alberta members of the group is not explored. With only a few exceptions, ethnicity is relegated to superficial expression through perceptual elements and material culture that are shown to be important only if a connection to the homeland can be made. The dearth of ethnic expression generated on the prairie since the settlement era in the museum indicates that ethnicity still has an uncomfortable home in the Canadian West because it relies so heavily on connections to the homeland for its definition.

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APPENDIX

Note on Collection - If pioneer materials were listed or implied as part of the collection they are listed here first; following that they are in no particular order. Type of collection is listed here if the collection description indicated that it was a significant part of the collection. For instance, church/religious items were considered a part of the pioneer collection unless the description indicated it was a significant part of the collection, in which case, it was listed separately. An attempt was made to use descriptors consistently and therefore they may not reflect the language used by the museum. The term ethnic often replaced multicultural. See original source for the full description. For Churches: (B) Baptist, (C) Catholic, (A) Anglican, (L) Lutheran, (M) Methodist, (MB) Mennonite Brethren, (MR) Mormon, (O) Orthodox, (P) Presbyterian, and (U) United Church.

Note on Ethnicity - "None" indicates no ethnicity is identified. "N/A" indicates the category is not applicable.

Note on Government - "Community" indicates run by a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization or a small municipality, town or village.

Note on Source - If no source is indicated the information is taken from Alberta Museums Association, *Directory of Alberta Museums & Related Organizations* (Edmonton: Alberta Museums Association, 1997). Other sources abbreviated as follows:

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(RD) "Raymond and District Historical Society," Brochure, Raymond and District Historical Society, Raymond, AB.

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(SB) Sue Baptie, "The Case of the Missing Museum," *Glenbow: A Newsletter of the Glenbow Alberta Institute* 5:6 (1972): 6-7.

(TA) Travel Alberta, "Attractions," *Travel Alberta*. http://www1.travelalberta.com/content/attractions (accessed 23 November 2003).

(TT) Theresa E. Thomson, "One Thousand Climbs to Breakfast," *Alberta Historical Review* 22:1 (1974): 12-17.

(VMC) Virtual Museum of Canada. "Find a Museum." *Virtual Museum of Canada*. http://www.virtualmuseum.ca/English/MuseumsEvents/index.html (accessed 23 November 2003).

Museum	Town	Collection	Ethnicity	Year Opened	Government	Source and Notes
Dr. Henry George Museum	Red Deer	Natural	N/A	1889	Private	MR, operating in his Innisfail home in 1890s, 236.
Banff Park Museum	Banff	Natural	N/A	1895	Federal	Also See TT for date.
Judge W.B. Gray Museum	Stettler	Natural, Military	N/A	1910	Private	JL, 22-30.
Calgary Museum	Calgary	Pioneer, Natural, Aboriginal, International	None	1911	Community	SB
Edmonton Art Gallery	Edmonton	Art	N/A	1923	Community	JT, 26.
Edmonton Bulletin / Old Timers Association Museum	Edmonton	Pioneer	None	1925	Community	HS, run by NAOTA, building moved to Exhibition grounds in 1925 with adjoining museum, 22. Now part of Ft Edmonton Park.
Father Lacombe Museum and Shrine	St. Albert	Pioneers, Missionaries (C), Metis	French	1927	Community	HS, 24. FT gives date, 27. Opened by Province in 1984 as Father Lacombe Chapel.
Calgary Inglewood Centre	Calgary	Natural	N/A	1929	Community	AC
Pioneer Days Museum	Edmonton	Pioneer	None	1933	Private	MR, 239. Ernest Brown's.
Ukrainian Museum of Canada Alberta Branch	Edmonton	Pioneer, Ukrainian (O), Women	Ukrainian	1944	Community	MT, 989.
Walter Gurney Museum	Lethbridge	Curios	None	1944	Private	SAG
Arctic Institute Of North America	Calgary	Exploration, Geographical	N/A	1945	University	
Horseman's Hall of Fame	Calgary	Pioneer, Natural, Aboriginal, International	None	1948	Community	SB
Luxton Museum	Banff	Aboriginal, Natural, Art	Aboriginal	1951	Community	
Elk Island Park Museum	Elk Island National Park	Pioneer, Ukrainian	Ukrainian	1951	Federal	HS, governing authority assumed, 27. AHR 5(4): 20.
Ukrainian Catholic Women's League of Canada Arts and Crafts Museum	Edmonton	Pioneer, Ukrainian, Art, Church (C)	Ukrainian	1952	Community	

George McDougall Memorial Church	Edmonton	Pioneer, Church (M)	None	1953	Community	HS, 27. AHR 1(2): 5, gives date. Now part of Fort Edmonton. EB, 65.124/139 *notes* transactions between museum committee and Brown in 1946.
Historic John McDougall Church	Morley	Pioneer, Church (M)	None	1953	Community	AHR 1(2): 4.
Basilian Fathers Museum	Mundare	Pioneer, Church (C), Ukrainian	Ukrainian	1953	Community	AC gives 1932 as opening date.
Calgary Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry Regimental Museum	Calgary	Military	N/A	1954	Community	
Medicine Hat Museum and Art Gallery	Medicine Hat	Pioneer, Aboriginal, Art	None	1954	City	
Reynolds Museum	Wetaskiwin	Pioneer, Transportation, Military	None	1955	Private	
University Of Alberta Geology	Edmonton	Natural	N/A	1956	University	AC
Drumheller Dinosaur and Fossil Museum	Drumheller	Pioneer, Natural, Mining, Aboriginal	None	1957	Community	
Fort Museum	Fort Macleod	Pioneer, Police, Aboriginal	None	1957	Community	Also in AHR 7(4): 30 - 31.
Pigeon Lake Preservation Committee	Pigeon Lake	Pioneer, Missionaries (M)	None	1958	Community	AHR 6(2): 30.
Historical Village and Pioneer Museum at Shandro	Willingdon	Pioneer, Church (O), Ukrainian	Ukrainian	1958	Community	AC gives 1959 as open date
Lac Ste. Anne Historical Society Pioneer Museum	Rochfort Bridge	Pioneer, Aboriginal	None	1959	Community	Also in AHR 7(4): 30.
Sangudo	Sangudo	Pioneer	None	1959	Community	AC
Morrison Museum of the Country School	Islay	Pioneer, Education	None	1960	Community	
Willow Creek Historical Association	Willow Creek	Pioneer	None	1960	Community	AHR 8(2): 26.
Historic Dunvegan	Dunvegan	Pioneers, Fur Trade, Missionaries(C)	French	1961	Province	AC gives 1961 as opening date, HS2 indicates Oblates are operating as a museum in the 1970 edition, 28. MA gives 1976 date. AHR 6(1): 30 in 1958 notes the province's intent to open.
John Walter Museum	Edmonton	Pioneer	None	1961	City	AC gives 1958 as open date.
Museum of the Highwood	High River	Pioneer, Aboriginal	None	1961	Community	

Alberta Sports Hall of Fame and Museum	Red Deer	Sport	N/A	1961	Community	
Tofield Museum	Tofield	Pioneer, Natural	None	1961	Community	
C.O. Card Home	Cardston	Pioneer	Mormon	1962	Community	AHR 10(1): 29 notes plans to open in summer 1962, HS2 notes preserved by town in 1970 edition, 53.
Prairie Panorama Museum	Czar	Pioneer	None	1962	Community	AC, name from VMC.
University of Alberta Dentistry Museum	Edmonton	Dentistry	N/A	1963	University	AHR 11(3): 29 mentions in operation in 1963 probably opened earlier.
Barr Colony Heritage Cultural Centre	Lloydminster	Pioneer, Church (A)	British	1963	City	AC gives 1968 as open date.
Heritage Park Historical Village	Calgary	Pioneer, Fur Trade, Railway, River, Military	None	1964	Community	
Sir Alexander Galt Museum	Lethbridge	Pioneer, Mining	None	1964	City	
Rimbey Museum and Pas-ka-poo Park	Rimby	Pioneer, Transportation	None	1964	Community	AC gives 1966 as open date.
Homestead Antique Museum	Drumheller	Pioneer, Mining, Aboriginal	None	1965	Community	Began as private museum.
Hanna and District Pioneer Museum	Hanna	Pioneer, Railway	None	1965	Community	AC gives 1968 as open date.
Glenbow Museum	Calgary	Pioneer, Ethnology, International, Military, Art, Aboriginal	Ethnic	1966	Community	
Barrhead and District Centennial Museum	Barrhead	Pioneer	None	1967	Community	
South Peace Centennial Museum	Beaverlodge	Pioneer, Railway	None	1967	Community	
Bowden Pioneer Museum	Bowden	Pioneer, Military, Natural, Aboriginal	None	1967	Community	
Camrose and District Centennial Museum	Camrose	Pioneer, Fire, Military	None	1967	Community	
Loyal Edmonton Regiment Military Museum	Edmonton	Military	N/A	1967	Community	
Provincial Museum of Alberta	Edmonton	Pioneer, Aboriginal, Natural, Ethnology, Government, Art	Ethnic	1967	Province	
High Prairie and District Museum	High Prairie	Pioneer, Aboriginal, Metis, Railway, Fur Trade	Metis	1967	Community	AC gives 1959 as open date.

Fort Whoop-up Interpretive Centre	Lethbridge	Police, Liquor Trade	None	1967	Community	
Iron Creek Museum	Lougheed	Pioneer	None	1967	Community	AC gives 1976 as open date.
Peace River Centennial Museum	Peace River	Pioneer, Aboriginal, Fur Trade, Railway, River	None	1967	Community	AC gives 1968 as open date. Also called the Sir Alexander Mackenzie Museum.
Fort Ostell Museum	Ponoka	Pioneer	None	1967	Community	
Viking Historical Museum	Viking	Pioneer	None	1967	Community	
Whyte Museum of the Canadian Rockies	Banff	Pioneer, Geographical	None	1968	Community	
Claresholm Museum	Claresholm	Pioneer	None	1969	Community	AC gives 1960 as open date.
Girlouxville Museum	Girlouxville	Pioneer, Fur Trade, Missionaries, Oil	French	1969	Community	
Grande Prairie Museum	Grande Prairie	Pioneer, Natural, Military	None	1970	Community	
Innisfail Historical Village	Innisfail	Pioneer, Transportation	None	1970	Community	AC gives 1969 as open date.
Sundre Pioneer Village Museum	Sundre	Pioneer	None	1970	Community	
Andrew and District Local History Museum	Andrew	Pioneer, Natural	None	1971	Community	AC
Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village	Edmonton	Pioneer, Ukrainian	Ukrainian	1971	Province	MR, began community run, bought by province in 1975, 253.
Alberta Forest Service Museum	Hinton	Natural, Logging	N/A	1971	Province	
University Of Alberta Museums and Collections	Edmonton	Ethnology, Classics, Natural, Archaeology	Ethnic	1972	University	
Pincher Creek and District Museum and Kootenai Brown Historical Park	Pincher Creek	Pioneer	None	1972	Community	
Plamondon and District Museum	Plamondon	Pioneer	None	1972	Community	AC, name from VMC.
Calgary Lord Strathcona's Horse Regimental Museum	Calgary	Military	N/A	1973	Community	
Calgary Sam Livingston Interpretive Centre	Calgary	Pioneer, Natural	None	1973	Community	AC
Edmonton Aviation Hall of Fame	Edmonton	Aviation	N/A	1973	Community	AC
Crossroads Museum	Oyen	Pioneer, Aboriginal, Natural	None	1973	Community	AC gives 1972 as open date.
Red Deer and District Museum	Red Deer	Pioneer, Aboriginal	None	1973	City	AC gives 1978 as open date.
Canada's Aviation Hall of Fame	Wetaskiwin	Aviation	N/A	1973	Community	

Big Valley Museum	Big Valley	Pioneer, Railway, Mining, Oil	None	1974	Community	
Oldman River Cultural Centre	Brocket	Aboriginal	Aboriginal	1974	Community	
Leighton Foundation Collection	Calgary	Pioneer, Art	None	1974	Community	MAML
Fort Edmonton Park	Edmonton	Pioneer, Fur Trade, Railway	None	1974	City	AC gives 1975 as open date.
Rutherford House	Edmonton	Pioneer, Government	None	1974	Province	MR gives date as 1973, 253.
Ukrainian Canadian Museum and Archives and Museum of Alberta	Edmonton	Pioneer, Ukrainian	Ukrainian	1974	Community	
Mountain View Museum	Olds	Pioneer	None	1974	Community	
Saddle Lake Cultural Museum	Saddle Lake	Aboriginal, Metis, Natural	Aboriginal	1974	Community	
Eastern Irrigation District Historical Park and Museum	Scandia	Pioneer	None	1974	Community	
Stettler Town & Country Museum	Stettler	Pioneer	None	1974	Community	
Multicultural Heritage Centre	Stony Plain	Pioneer	Ethnic	1974	Community	
Alix Wagon Wheel Regional Museum	Alix	Pioneer, Natural	None	1975	Community	AC gives 1971 as open date.
Brooks and District Museum	Brooks	Pioneer, Irrigation, Police, Railway, Ethnic	Ethnic	1975	Community	
Aerospace Museum of Calgary	Calgary	Aviation	N/A	1975	Community	
DeBolt and District Museum	DeBolt	Pioneer, Natural, Church (LI)	None	1975	Community	
Fairview Agricultural Society Museum	Fairview	Pioneer, Police	None	1975	Community	AC gives 1974 as open date.
Fort Saskatchewan Museum	Fort Saskatchewan	Pioneer, Police	None	1975	Community	AC gives 1967 as open date.
High Level - Private Institution	High Level	Pioneer	None	1975	Private	AC
Kneehill Historical Museum	Three Hills	Pioneer, Radio, Railway	None	1975	Community	
Ukrainian Museum of Canada Calgary Collection	Calgary	Pioneer, Ukrainian	Ukrainian	1976	Community	
Calgary Police Services Interpretive Centre	Calgary	Police	N/A	1976	Community	
Native Cultural Arts Museum	Grouard	Aboriginal, Missionaries	Aboriginal	1976	Province	
Alberta Railway Museum	Edmonton	Railway	N/A	1977	Community	
Red Water Museum	Red Water	Pioneer, Oil	None	1977	Community	AC gives 1974 as open date.
Seba Beach Heritage Museum	Seba Beach	Pioneer, Sailing	None	1977	Community	
Siksika Nation Museum of Natural History	Siksika Nation	Aboriginal, Natural, Art, Fur Trade	Aboriginal	1977	Community	

Fort Calgary Historic Park	Calgary	Pioneer, Police	None	1978	Community	
Castor and District Museum	Castor	Pioneer, Mining	None	1978	Community	
Anthony Henday Museum	Delburne	Pioneer, Railway, Mining	None	1978	Community	
Didsbury and District Museum	Didsbury	Pioneer, Railway, Military, Aboriginal	None	1978	Community	AC gives 1983 as open date.
Nickle Arts Museum	Calgary	Art, Coins, Ethnology	Ethnic	1979	University	
Cochrane Ranche	Cochrane	Pioneer, Ranching	None	1979	Province	
Dewberry Valley Museum	Dewberry	Pioneer, Fur Trade, Aboriginal, Rebellion	None	1979	Community	
Rocky Mountain House National Historic Site	Rocky Mountain House	Fur Trade, Aboriginal	None	1979	Federal	AC gives 1978 as open date.
Rosebud Centennial Museum	Rosebud	Pioneer	Chinese	1979	Community	
Whitecourt and District Historical Society	Whitecourt	Pioneer	None	1979	Community	MAML
Stockmen's Memorial Foundation	Cochrane	Pioneers	None	1980	Community	
Donalda and District Museum	Donalda	Pioneer, Lamps	None	1980	Community	
Strathcona Archaeological Centre	Edmonton	Archaeology	N/A	1980	Province	MR, 253.
Alberta Aviation Museum	Edmonton	Aviation	N/A	1980	Community	
Sturgeon River Historical Museum	Gibbons	Pioneer	None	1980	Community	AC gives 1983 as open date.
Calgary Telecom Hall of Fame	Calgary	Communications	N/A	1981	Community	
Grain Academy Museum	Calgary	Pioneer	None	1981	Community	
Alberta Association of Registered Nurses Museum and Archives	Edmonton	Medicine, Military	N/A	1981	Community	
Galloway Station Museum	Edson	Pioneer, Railway, Mining, Logging	None	1981	Community	
Fort Assiniboine Friendship Club Museum	Fort Assinibione	Fur Trade, Police	None	1981	Community	Date from AC.
Prairie Memories Museum	Irvine	Pioneer, Logging	None	1981	Community	
Michener House	Lacombe	Pioneer, Government	None	1981	Community	
Morinville Museum	Morinville	Pioneer, Church (C), French	French	1981	Community	AC
Redcliff Museum	Redcliff	Pioneer, Mining, Glass, Bricks	None	1981	Community	AC gives 1982 as open date.
Sedgewick Archives and Gallery	Sedgewick	Pioneer	None	1981	Community	
Calgary Highlanders Museum and Archives	Calgary	Military	N/A	1982	Community	MAML

Court House Museum	Cardston	Pioneer, Natural, Mormon	Mormon	1982	Community	
Chauvin and District Museum	Chauvin	Pioneer	None	1982	Community	
Calgary and Edmonton Railway Museum	Edmonton	Railway	N/A	1982	Community	
Stephansson House	Markerville	Pioneer, Icelandic	Icelandic	1982	Province	
Police Point Interpretive Centre	Medicine Hat	Natural	N/A	1982	City	
Victoria Settlement	Smoky Lake	Fur Trade, Missionaries (M)	None	1982	Province	MR gives date as 1981, 253.
Centre Vital Grandin Centre	St. Albert	Pioneer, Missionaries (C), French	French	1982	Community	
Trochu and District Museum	Trochu	Pioneer, Mining	None	1982	Community	
Ukrainian Catholic Church of the Assumption of the Virgin Mary	Waugh	Pioneer, Ukrainian (C)	Ukrainian	1982	Community	HI, 97.
Tsuu T'ina Museum	Calgary	Aboriginal	Aboriginal	1983	Community	
Energeum	Calgary	Oil, Mining, Electricity	N/A	1983	Community	
Leitch Collieries	Crowsnest Pass	Mining	N/A	1983	Province	
Edmonton Public Schools Archives and Museum	Edmonton	Pioneer, Education, Government	None	1983	Community	
Pioneer Acres of Alberta Museum	Irricana	Pioneer	None	1983	Community	AC indicates had a collection in 1970.
Dr. Woods House Museum	Leduc	Pioneer	None	1983	Community	
Nokoda Institute	Morley	Aboriginal	Aboriginal	1983	Community	
Neerlandia Historical Society Museum	Neerlandia	Pioneer	None	1983	Community	
Rocky Mountain House Museum	Rocky Mountain House	Pioneer, Logging	None	1983	Community	
Yester Year Artifacts Museum	Rowley	Pioneer	None	1983	Community	
Reynolds Aviation Museum	Wetaskiwin	Aviation	N/A	1983	Private	
Edgerton and District Museum	Edgerton	Pioneer, Railway, Church (U)	None	1984	Community	
Edmonton Radial Railway Society Collection	Edmonton	Transportation	N/A	1984	Community	
Battle River Pioneer Museum	Manning	Pioneer, Natural	None	1984	Community	AC gives 1983 as open date.
Nordegg Interpretive Centre	Nordegg	Pioneer, Mining	None	1984	Community	
Prairie Acres Heritage Village and Farm Equipment Museum	Picture Butte	Pioneer	None	1984	Community	

Smoky Lake Museum	Smoky Lake	Pioneer, Ukrainian, Aboriginal, Natural	Ukrainian	1984	Community	
Musee Heritage Museum	St. Albert	Pioneer, Aboriginal, Natural, Education, Railway	French	1984	City	
Musee Historique de St. Paul Historical Museum	St. Paul	Pioneer, Metis, Aboriginal	French	1984	Community	
Taber and District Museum	Taber	Pioneer, Irrigation	None	1984	Community	Also called the Taber Irrigation Impact Museum.
Alliance and District Museum	Alliance	Pioneer, Railway	None	1985	Community	
Beiseker Station Museum	Beiseker	Pioneer	None	1985	Community	
Frank Slide Interpretive Centre	Blairmore	Mining, Natural	N/A	1985	Province	
Locomotive and Railway Historical Society of Western Canada	Calgary	Railway	N/A	1985	Community	
Appaloosa Horse Club Senior Citizens Museum and Archives	Claresholm	Pioneer, Equestrian	None	1985	Community	
Tri-Town Museum	Cold Lake	Pioneer, Military, Aboriginal, Oil	None	1985	Community	
Crowsnest Museum	Coleman	Pioneer, Mining, Logging, Natural, Military, Railway	None	1985	Community	
Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology	Drumheller	Natural	N/A	1985	Province	
East Coulee School Museum and Cultural Centre	East Coulee	Pioneer, Mining, Natural, Ethnic, Education	Ethnic	1985	Community	
Edmonton Police Museum	Edmonton	Police	N/A	1985	Community	
Old Strathcona Model and Toy Museum	Edmonton	Toys	N/A	1985	Private	
Red Brick Arts Centre and Museum	Edson	Pioneer, Education	None	1985	Community	
Oil Sands Discovery Centre	Fort McMurray	Oil	N/A	1985	Province	Date from MR, 253.
Heritage Park	Fort McMurray	Pioneer, Missionaries (C), Railway	None	1985	Community	AC gives 1974 as open date.
End of Steel Heritage Museum and Park	Hines Creek	Pioneer, Railway, Fur Trade, Ethnic	Ethnic	1985	Community	
Kinosayo Museum	Kinuso	Pioneer, Natural	None	1985	Community	
Millet and District Museum and Exhibit Room	Millet	Pioneer	None	1985	Community	

Mirror and District Museum	Mirror	Pioneer, Railway, Church (A)	None	1985	Community	
Profiles Public Art Gallery	St. Albert	Art	N/A	1985	City	MAML
Waterton Natural History Museum	Waterton	Natural	N/A	1985	Federal	
Crowsnest Pass Ecomuseum	Bellevue	Mining, Ethnic	Ethnic	1986	Community	
Fort Edmonton Masonic Museum	Edmonton	Pioneer	None	1986	Community	MAML
Forestburg and District Museum	Forestburg	Pioneer	None	1986	Community	
Historic Markerville Creamery Museum	Markerville	Pioneer, Icelandic	Icelandic	1986	Community	
Nanton Lancaster Society Air Museum	Nanton	Aviation	N/A	1986	Community	
Kerry Wood Nature Centre	Red Deer	Natural	N/A	1986	City	
Fort Normandeau Historic Site and Interpretive Centre	Red Deer	Pioneer, Military, Metis	Metis	1986	City	HS notes was preserved by Central Alberta Old Timers Assc. in his 1952 edition, 33.
Norwegian Laft Haus	Red Deer	Pioneer, Norwegian	Norwegian	1986	City	
Ryley Museum	Ryley	Pioneer	None	1986	Community	MAML
Sodbusters Archives and Museum	Strome	Pioneer, Natural, Aboriginal, Military	None	1986	Community	
Lukusta Heritage Foundation of Canada	Vegreville	Pioneer, Ukrainian, Police, Aboriginal, Natural, French	Ukrainian	1986	Private	
Wetaskiwin and District Museum	Wetaskiwin	Pioneer, Military	None	1986	Community	
Nose Creek Valley Museum	Airdrie	Pioneer, Natural, Aboriginal, Railway, Military	None	1987	Community	
Community Historical Museum of Caroline	Caroline	Pioneer, Logging	None	1987	Community	
Canadian Petroleum Interpretive Centre	Devon	Oil	N/A	1987	Community	MAML
Telephone Historical Centre	Edmonton	Communications	N/A	1987	Community	
Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump	Fort Macleod	Aboriginal	Aboriginal	1987	Province	
Field Station of the Royal Tyrrell Museum Palaeontology	Patricia	Natural	N/A	1987	Community	AC gives 1955 as open date.
Alberta Beach and District Museum and Archives	Alberta Beach	Pioneer	None	1988	Community	
Canadian Northern Railway Society	Big Valley	Railway	N/A	1988	Community	
Navel Museum of Alberta	Calgary	Military	N/A	1988	Community	
Olympic Hall of Fame and Museum	Calgary	Sport	N/A	1988	Community	

Centennial Museum	Canmore	Pioneer, Mining, Ethnic, Sport, Police	Ethnic	1988	Community	
Roulston Museum	Carstairs	Pioneer, Church (P)	None	1988	Community	
Children's Educational Wildlife Museum	Edmonton	Natural, Ethnology	Ethnic	1988	Community	
Fort Vermillion Heritage Centre Lean to Museum and Archives	Fort Vermillion	Pioneer, Fur Trade	None	1988	Community	
Lac La Biche Mission	Lac La Biche	Pioneer, Missionaries (C)	French	1988	Community	
Echo Dale Historical Farm	Medicine Hat	Pioneer	None	1988	City	
Clay Products Interpretive Centre	Medicine Hat	Pottery	N/A	1988	Community	
Raymond Museum and Archives	Raymond	Pioneer, Church (MR)	Mormon	1988	Community	
Two Hills and District Museum	Two Hills	Pioneer, Railway	None	1988	Community	
Breton and District Historical Museum	Breton	Pioneer, Railway, Logging	Black	1989	Community	
Beth Tzedec Heritage Collection	Calgary	Jewish	Jewish	1989	Community	
Delia and District Historical Museum	Delia	Pioneer, Natural	None	1989	Community	
Bar U Ranch National Historic Site	Longview	Pioneer, Ranching	None	1989	Federal	MAML
Magrath Museum	Magrath	Pioneer	Mormon	1989	Community	RD
Nobleford Area Museum	Nobleford	Pioneer	None	1989	Community	MAML
Sexsmith Blacksmith Shop Museum	Sexsmith	Pioneer	None	1989	Community	
Stavely and District Museum	Stavely	Pioneer	None	1989	Community	
Saint Ann Ranch Museum and Interpretive Centre	Trochu	Pioneer, French, Church (C)	French	1989	Province	
Vegreville Regional Museums	Vegreville	Pioneer, Police, Government	None	1989	Community	
Wainwright and District Museum	Wainwright	Pioneer, Military, Railway, Oil	None	1989	Community	AC gives 1964 open date. AHR 12(3): 30 notes museum society formed by 1964.
Museum of the Regiments	Calgary	Military	N/A	1990	Community	
Historic Atlas Coal Mine	East Coulee	Mining	N/A	1990	Community	
Enchant and District Museum	Enchant	Pioneer, Railway	None	1990	Community	
Canadian National Historic Windmill Centre	Etzicome	Pioneer, Windmills	None	1990	Community	
Fort Chip Bicentennial Museum	Fort Chip	Pioneer, Aboriginal, Fur Trade	None	1990	Community	

Jasper Yellowhead Museum and Archives	Jasper	Pioneer, Natural	None	1990	Community	
Nampa and District Historical Society Museum	Nampa	Pioneer, Railway	None	1990	Community	
Ranfurly and District Museum	Ranfurly	Pioneer	None	1990	Community	
Spirit River and District Museum	Spirit River	Pioneer, Natural, Oil	None	1990	Community	
Arrowwood Restoration Society Museum	Arrowwood	Pioneer	Doukhobor	1991	Community	
Bonnyville and District Museum	Bonnyville	Pioneer, French Canadian, Fur Trade	French	1991	Community	
Dickson Store Museum	Dickson	Pioneer, Danish	Danish	1991	Community	
Victoria Composite High School Museum and Archives	Edmonton	Education	N/A	1991	Community	
Mackenzie Crossroads Museum and Visitor Centre	High Level	Pioneer, Fur Trade	None	1991	Community	
Vermillion Heritage Museum	Vermillion	Pioneer	None	1991	Community	
Westlock and District Historical Museum	Westlock	Pioneer, Military	None	1991	Community	AK, 298, mentions an early log school, community hall and municipal office restored as 1967 centennial project.
Girl Guides of Canada Alberta Council Archives and Museum	Edmonton	Girl Guides	N/A	1992	Community	
Newbrook Historical Observatory	Edmonton	Space	N/A	1992	Community	MAML
Elk Point / Fort George Buckingham House	Elk Point	Fur Trade, Aboriginal	Aboriginal	1992	Province	
Holden Historical Society Museum	Holden	Pioneer	None	1992	Community	
Kalyna Country Ecomuseum	Kalyna Country	Pioneer, Natural	Ukrainian	1992	Community	MAML
Alberta Heritage Exposition Park	Leduc	Pioneer, Church (L)	None	1992	Community	
Stony Plain and District Pioneer Museum	Stony Plain	Pioneer	None	1992	Community	
Alberta Central Railway Museum	Wetaskiwin	Railway	N/A	1992	Community	
Reynolds Alberta Museum	Wetaskiwin	Transportation	N/A	1992	Province	
Calgary Chinese Cultural Centre	Calgary	Pioneer, Chinese, Science	Chinese	1993	Community	
Remington - Alberta Carriage Centre	Cardston	Transportation	N/A	1993	Province	Date from MR, 253.
Lac Cardinal Regional Pioneer Village Museum	Grimshaw	Pioneer	None	1993	Community	

Dr. George / Kemp House	Innisfail	Pioneer, Natural	None	1993	Community	
La Crete Mennonite Heritage Village	La Crete	Pioneer, Mennonite	German	1993	Community	MAML
Strathcona County Heritage Foundation Museum	Sherwood Park	Pioneer, Aboriginal, Police	None	1993	Community	
Bentley Museum	Bentley	Pioneer, Aboriginal	None	1994	Community	
Consort Museum	Consort	Pioneer	None	1994	Community	MAML
Alberta Legislature Building Interpretive Centre	Edmonton	Government	N/A	1994	Province	Exhibit area present from circa 1907, MR, 236-237.
Lougheed House	Calgary	Pioneer, Government	None	1995	Community	MAML
Climb Through Time Museum	Paradise Valley	Pioneer, Aboriginal, Railway	None	1995	Community	
Devil's Coulee Cooperation Society Museum	Warner	Pioneer, Natural	None	1995	Community	MAML
Alberta 2005 Centennial Railway Museum	Beiseker	Railway	N/A	1996	Community	MAML
Western Heritage Centre	Cochrane	Pioneer, Ranching	None	1996	Province	
Drayton Valley Historical Society Museum	Drayton Valley	Pioneer, Oil	None	1996	Community	
Irma Museum	Irma	Pioneer	None	1996	Community	MAML
Kingman Regional School Museum	Kingman	Pioneer, Education	None	1996	Community	MAML
Mallaig And District Haglund Museum	Mallaig	Pioneer, Art, Church (B)	None	1996	Community	
Sunnybrook Farm	Red Deer	Pioneer	None	1996	Community	MAML
A.V. Roe Canada Heritage Museum	Calgary	Aviation	N/A	1997	Community	MAML
Innisfree Prairie Bank of Commerce Museum	Innisfree	Pioneer, Banking	None	1997	Community	MAML
Melsness Mercantile	Valhalla Centre	Pioneer	None	1997	Community	
Wainwright Railway Preservation Society Museum	Wainwright	Railway	N/A	1997	Community	
Gem of the West	Coaldale	Pioneer, Irrigation, Ethnic, Church (MB)	Ethnic	1998	Community	
Vulcan and District Historical Museum	Vulcan	Pioneer	None	1998	Community	MAML
Warburg and District Museum	Warburg	Pioneer	None	1998	Community	MAML
Walker School Historical Room	Bruderheim	Pioneer, Education	None	1999	Community	MAML
Firefighter Museum	Calgary	Fire	N/A	1999	Community	MAML

Pioneer Threshermans Association at Triangle	High Prairie	Pioneer	None	1999	Community	MAML
Great Canadian Plains Railway Society	Lethbridge	Railway	N/A	1999	Community	MAML
The Station Cultural Centre and Okotoks Heritage House	Okotoks	Pioneer	None	2000	Community	MAML
Fire Works Canadian Fire Museum and Discovery Centre	Vermillion	Fire	N/A	2000	Community	MAML
Canadian Tractor Museum	Westlock	Pioneer	None	2000	Community	MAML
Musee de Plamondon	Plamondon	Pioneer, Church (C)	French	2001	Community	PL
Danish Canadian National Museum and Gardens	Dickson	Pioneer, Danish	Danish	2002	Community	
People's Museum of/de St. Paul	St. Paul	Pioneer	None	2002	Community	MAML
Andrew Grain Elevator Interpretive Centre	Andrew	Pioneer	None	2003	Community	MAML
Michif Cultural and Resource Institute	St. Albert	Metis	Metis	2003	Community	MAML
Prairie Elevator Museum	Acadia Valley	Pioneer	None		Community	TA
Cave and Basin National Historic Site	Banff	Geographical, Natural			Federal	TA
Canadian Ski Museum West	Banff	Sport			Community	TA
Grande Ole West Villa Ranch	Beiseker	Pioneer, Ranching				TA
Brooks Aqueduct	Brooks	Irrigation			Province	
Brownvale North Peace Agricultural Museum	Brownvale	Pioneer, Roads	None		Community	
Cereal Prairie Pioneer Museum	Cereal	Pioneer	None			VMC
Kinnoull Historical Society Pioneer Home	Colinton	Pioneer	None		Community	AK, 298. Restored as 1967 centennial project.
Ware Cabin	Dinosaur Provincial Park	Pioneer, Ranching, Black	Black		Province	HS2 notes preserved in 1970 edition, 55.
Pembina Lobstick Historical Museum	Evansburg	Pioneer	None		Community	VMC
Rocky Lane School Museum	Fort Vermillion	Pioneer, Education	None		Community	VMC
St. Bernard Mission Church	Grouard	Pioneer, Missionaries (C)	None			TA
Tack Shop Museum/Tourist Centre	Hythe	Pioneer	None			TA
Rainy Hills Pioneer Exhibits	Iddesleigh	Pioneer	None			VMC
Black Smith Shop Museum	Lacombe	Pioneer	None			MAML
Malmberg Museum	Malmberg	Pioneer	None		Community	FC, 107.

Old Hospital Museum and Gallery	Manning	Pioneer, Medicine	None		Community	TA
Historical and Railway Museum	McLennan	Pioneer, Railway	None		Community	
George McDougall Church - Pakan	Pakan	Pioneer, Church (M)	None		Community	HS2 notes was operating as a Museum in 1970 edition, 26.
Three Rivers Rock and Fossil Museum	Pincher Creek	Natural, Ethnology	N/A			TA
Oldman River Antique Equipment and Threshing Club	Pincher Creek	Pioneer	None		Community	
Alberta Hospital Museum	Ponoka	Medicine	N/A		Community	AK notes in operation in 1973.
Ponoka Cowboy Museum	Ponoka	Pioneer	None		Community	TA
Cronquist House Multicultural Centre	Red Deer	Ethnic	Ethnic			VMC
Passing of the Legends Museum	Seebe	Pioneer, Aboriginal	None			
Thorhild and District Museum	Thorhild	Pioneer, Ethnic	Ethnic		Community	
Grizzly Bear Prairie Museum	Wanham	Pioneer, Church (P)	None		Community	
Forest Interpretive Centre and Heritage Park	Whitecourt	Pioneer, Aboriginal, Logging	None			TA